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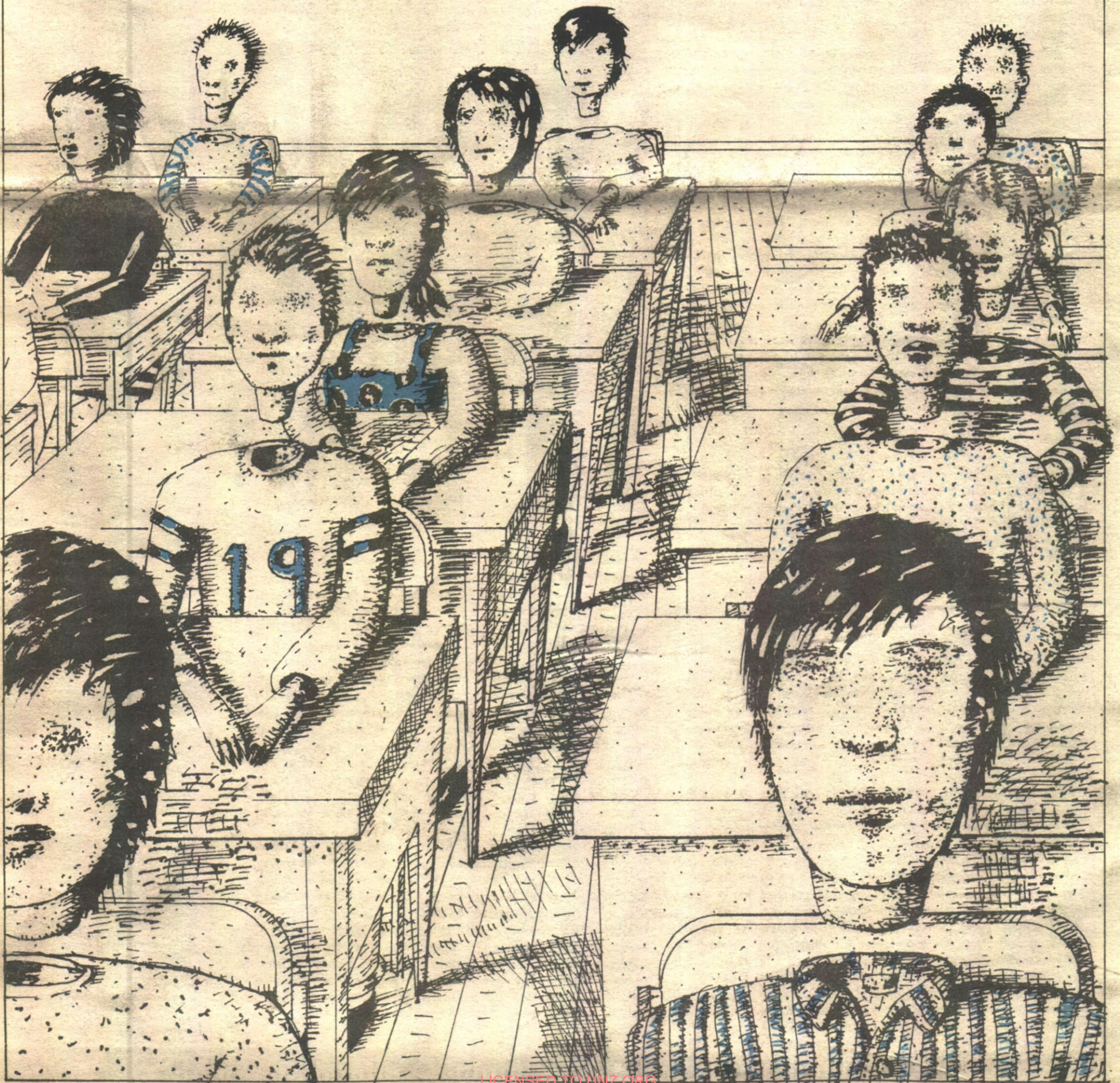
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SPECIAL EDUCATION ISSUE



Political spy trial opens in Pretoria

By David Goodman

HARARE, ZIMBABWE

A major political trial is getting underway this month in Pretoria that may present the most incriminating evidence yet assembled linking the South African regime with destabilization activities in southern Africa. On Dec. 15, 1983, South African security police arrested Patricia and Derek Hanekom on their dairy farm outside of Johannesburg. Two days earlier, Roland Hunter, a friend of the Hanekoms and a member of the South African Defense Forces (SADF), was arrested on suspicion of spying for the African National Congress. Banned in 1960, the ANC is the major liberation movement in South Africa fighting to overthrow the apartheid regime. The three, all of whom are white, have been charged under South Africa's infamous Internal Security Act with high treason.

Political trials are a common event in South Africa. But the Pretoria regime is particularly concerned about the nature of the evidence to be presented in this trial. According to the 22-page indictment, Roland Hunter is accused of having stolen "a large variety of documents and items pertaining to intelligence on military structures, personnel and operations" while he worked for the SADF's top secret intelligence unit, the Directorate of Special Tasks (DST). The Hanekoms are alleged to have put Hunter in contact with the African National Congress in Botswana, to which he supposedly passed on an undisclosed amount of the material. Among the items listed in the indictment that were allegedly stolen by Hunter are "planning notes on military operations; SADF Special Forces Foreign Intelligence source reports; foreign reconnaissance organization source report; report on layout of foreign brigade; photocopies of passports of DST operatives; various military operations orders; [and] photographs of DST personnel."

The regime of Prime Minister P.W. Botha consistently denies allegations of any South African involvement in the destabilization of the Frontline states. Speaking on September 1, Botha proclaimed that 1984 had "seen the further emergence of South Africa as a regional power willing to play a positive role in the normalization of relations and the settlement of disputes.... It has never been our aim to bring about a system of economic dependence under South Africa's dominance."

Opponents of the apartheid regime have never been fooled by the rhetoric. "It has always been clear in the past that Pretoria is supporting the destabilization of the Frontline states," argued the African National Congress spokesperson in Harare, Zimbabwe. "We have statements from bandits and dissidents confessing that they have been trained in South Africa. But this gives us the first hard evidence, the first official documentation we have." The spokesperson, who requested anonymity, also charged that the accused "were not in any way connected with the ANC."

"South Africans are bombarded every day with propaganda that the Botha regime is a promoter of peace in the region," explained an exiled South African anti-apartheid activist who is a spokesperson for a Harare-based group doing support work for Hunter and the Hanekoms. "Many South Africans don't believe the accusations by the Frontline states of South African-backed destabilization. But in this trial, there is incontrovertible evidence of the regime's involvement in the destabilization."

Spies or patriots?

Twenty-five-year-old Roland Mark Hunter was conscripted into the SADF in January 1983. Because of a back problem, he received non-combatant status and was assigned to be a clerk in the office of the Chief of Staff Intelligence of the SADF. His job involved regularly transporting people to and from bases of the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR), a group of armed rebels attempting to topple the socialist Mozambiquan government of President Samora Machel. He took supplies and wages to the camps, many of which were in Mozambique, and had access to information and documents relating to exact MNR activities and plans. According to the *Guardian* of London, one of his tasks included "the transportation of a group of 14-year-old girls abducted from Mozambique to MNR camps in the Eastern Transvaal for the rebels' entertainment."

Hunter is said by friends to have changed his mind about what he was doing when his duties required him to service bases of the Lesotho Liberation Army (LLA), another armed group launching attacks against Lesotho, a small independent country that lies within South Africa's borders. Hunter, who was born in Lesotho, decided he had had enough.

Derek Hanekom, who is 31, and Patricia Hanekom, who is 27, had been active in anti-apartheid work for several years. Patricia is a Zimbabwean citizen who had been an active supporter of the Zimbabwean liberation struggle and of the South West Africa Peoples Organization (SWAPO). The Hanekoms befriended Hunter in February 1983 and encouraged him to pass on his information to the ANC in Botswana. The indictment alleges that the Hanekoms arranged a meeting between Hunter and an ANC contact named "Jane," which took place at Johannesburg's busy Rotunda airport. She provided Hunter with instructions on how to send information to the ANC in Gabarone, Botswana. Hunter later travelled to Botswana in June 1983 to meet with ANC activists. Among the charges against the Hanekoms, Patricia is alleged to have travelled to Botswana in 1981 to meet with ANC members Marius and Jeanette Schoon and Patrick Fitzgerald. Jeanette Schoon and her six-year-old daughter Katryn were killed by a parcel bomb in Angola on June 28, 1984. The African

National Congress has blamed South African intelligence agents for their murder.

South African destabilization of the Frontline states takes a variety of forms. Economic sabotage is one form of pressure favored by Pretoria. Examples include the destruction of Zimbabwe's oil depots in December 1982, which destroyed two months' supply of oil worth \$12 million; repeated sabotage of the major railroad line from Zimbabwe to Beira (a major port in Mozambique) since 1980; terminating a preferential trade agreement with Zimbabwe in 1981 and, in the same year, recalling 80 South African railway cars on loan to Zimbabwe that were needed to transport a bumper crop.

South African-backed destabilization has also taken the form of political sabotage and outright terrorism. Recent examples include the assassination by parcel bombs of leading ANC activists Jeanette Schoon (Angola 1984) and Ruth First (Mozambique 1982) and the point-blank shooting of Joe Gqabi (Zimbabwe 1982); the attack by SADF troops on Maseru, the capitol of Lesotho, in December 1982, in which 42 "suspected" ANC members were murdered; the attack on three suspected ANC houses near Maputo, Mozambique, in January 1981, in which 12 people were killed.

Finally, Pretoria's most destructive weapon is probably its client "resistance" movements, described in a recent report by the American Friends Service Committee as being "supplied, led and directed by the SADF." These include the Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA), a group aided directly by SADF troops in southern Angola; the MNR, currently battling Mozambiquan forces in almost every region of that country, effectively bringing the economy to a standstill; dissident guerrillas in southern Zimbabwe; and the Lesotho Liberation Army.

Who is on trial?

The Hunter-Hanekom case presents several problems for the South African government. Because Patricia Hanekom is a Zimbabwean citizen, it will be argued that she cannot be tried for treason in South Africa. As a close friend of hers observed, "As regards the security interests of Zimbabwe, she's a patriot."

The case is a major embarrassment for the SADF. This is the second major spy scandal to rock the SADF this year. In January, South African naval commander Dieter Gerhardt was sentenced to life in prison after being convicted of spying for the Soviet Union for 20 years. The case also creates a public relations problem for



Prime Minister Botha denies destabilization activities.

THE INSIDER STORY

the SADF. "There is a big debate in South Africa whether or not to go into the army. It is quite a pivotal choice for many young people," explained a South African exile. "Many young people have refused military service and have left the country. Roland's actions show that there is a role inside the SADF for the struggle, but it is a very serious choice. Everyone is looking to see the state's response to this case." Under South African military law, Hunter could receive the death sentence if convicted.

The South African government is aware of the bombshell it is holding. The trial has been postponed repeatedly, although the three have been held in detention since their arrest nine months ago. The trial is expected to drag on for weeks, possibly months. Many people fear that the state will try Hunter *in camera*, an extraordinary legal move that would bar the public from learning about the evidence presented in the case.

But the damage to Pretoria has already been done. A South African security officer stated that Hunter had achieved "a dramatic penetration of South African intelligence." He claimed that vital information had already been passed to Mozambiquan officials early this year, and that this strengthened Mozambique's hand in the negotiations that led to the signing of the Nkomati security accord in March 1984. Public knowledge of Pretoria's destabilization activities could change public opinion in South Africa against the Botha regime. This trial comes at a time of the largest anti-government demonstrations in South Africa since the Soweto uprising of 1976. The case also jeopardizes Pretoria's ability to force Frontline states such as Botswana and Lesotho to sign "peace" treaties aimed at destroying the ANC. Indeed, the main defendant in this trial may be the Pretoria regime itself. David Goodman is a freelance journalist and a member of the editorial collective of *Science for the People* magazine.



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By Harvey Levenstein

HAMILTON, ONTARIO

RARELY HAVE THE FORTUNES of political parties and politicians fluctuated so wildly in such a short period as they did during the recent election in Canada. While the landslide victory of Brian Mulroney's Progressive Conservatives, who won 211 seats out of the 275 in the House of Commons, may now seem to have been fated from the start, it did not appear so in June.

Then, the new prime minister, John Turner—who had just succeeded Pierre Trudeau as the Liberal Party's leader and prime minister—called the election on the basis of polls that showed the change to have restored his party's popularity enough so that they could expect a comfortable victory.

Nor did the relatively good showing of Canada's social democratic party, the New Democratic Party (NDP), seem at all possible in June, when the polls said that its support had shrunk from the 18 percent it garnered in the last election in 1980, to from 10 to 12 percent. Yet it managed to increase its share of the popular vote slightly to 19 percent and to retain 30 seats compared to the 31 it held in the previous parliament.

Most important, it gained four seats in Ontario, raising its total there to 13, only one less than the Liberals. This maintained its credibility in Canada's industrial heartland and averted the danger that it would be relegated to its Western strongholds and reduced to the status of a regional protest party.

Combined with the almost complete collapse of the Liberals, who were reduced to 40 seats, only two of which are in the West, this gives the NDP about as great a claim to being a national opposition party as the Liberals. While the NDP lost a few marginal seats in the West, where they remain a much more powerful force than the Liberals, they will still outnumber the Liberals by 30 to 16 in members from west of Quebec province. Indeed, for one brief euphoric moment on election night, when news of the Liberal collapse and the NDP gains in Ontario had come in but the losses in the West had not been tallied, there was serious discussion of the party's surpassing the Liberals in seats and becoming the official opposition.

As it stands, NDP leader Ed Broadbent's election night vow to be the real opposition in Parliament has a credible ring, for the Liberals are completely demoralized and rudderless. Though not quite leaderless, they might as well be. Turner did manage to squeak to victory in a Vancouver seat but has been completely discredited in large sections of what remains of the party. The knives will certainly be out for him in the leadership review that will follow this defeat.

Turner's ineptitude.

The now-scrawny wolves will go at Turner with some justice, for his political ineptitude played a major role in the disaster. He won the leadership by promising a new image and fresh faces for a party reduced to a collection of hacks grown fat after 50-odd years of nearly uninterrupted power. He then proceeded to name almost all of Trudeau's discredited cabinet to his new cabinet. To get rid of some of the more unrecalcitrant Trudeau loyalists he went along with naming more than 30 of them to cushy sinecures—an act the opposition was able rather cynically to portray as symbolizing the moral decay of the Liberal party.

Turner's youthful good looks are fading and his speaking style is disastrous. Even Richard Nixon's unshaven scowl in his first debate with John Kennedy did him less harm than did Turner's stumbling, stuttering, inept performance in the first televised debate among the three leaders. And subsequent blunders such as publicly patting some women's posteriors and having to apologize for citing wrong statistics didn't help his image either.

Yet it was his image that had played the major role in propelling Turner into his brief stint as prime minister. As a handsome, athletic-looking young man with sparkling blue eyes he had been one of the party's rising stars of the late '60s. But he lost out to another handsome young star, Pierre Trudeau, in the 1968 leadership contest. Trudeau had to put him in his cabinet, but gave him the post of finance minister, often a political minefield.

When Turner apparently sensed that Trudeau—who could brook no other stars near—was going to force him to start walking through the minefields, he resigned to join one of Toronto's top corporate law firms. Holding court at his reserved table at the city's most exclusive restaurant, he strengthened his ties to big business, let it be known that he was conservative on economics, kept his party connections open and waited for his ship to come in.

By 1980, with Reagan's election, Margaret Thatcher's apparent invincibility and the conservative tide that appeared to be sweeping the Western world, Turner's ship sighted land. Trudeau's popularity, revived only briefly by the short-lived fiasco of Joe Clark's Conservative government of 1978, was plummeting again, particularly in English Canada and most particularly in the West, where for some perverse reason, the yahoo-dominated business community insisted on regarding him as some kind of Communist. (In fact, the more political sophisticated businesspeople were not so much concerned about Trudeau's putative left-wing economic views as they were about the apparent fact that he had no economic views. With the country sinking into depression and the deficit, interest rates and unemployment soaring, Trudeau seemed to maintain his characteristic philosopher's indifference to the mundane world of dollars and cents.)

As pressure for Trudeau's resignation mounted, Turner stood in the wings waiting to be called in to lead the party away from deficit spending, public works lollipops and New Dealish politics. Yet no sooner had he been swept into the leadership when his master plan began to fall apart. Traditional Liberal strategy had been to carve out a center-left position, squeezing the NDP out into left field. Now they were staking out essentially the same position as the Tories. The NDP's Broadbent was therefore able to portray Turner and Mulroney as "the Bobsey Twins of Bay Street," Canada's Wall Street.

To make matters worse, as evidence mounted that the NDP was carving into Liberal support, Turner lurched to the left, adopting Broadbent's call for a minimum tax on the rich, lamely calling Mulroney, who had done the same thing, "a let's pretend Liberal." In fact, Mulroney was not pretending to be anything, since, running at the head of a very diverse party, he could not afford to be anything in particular without alienating large numbers of supporters.

Mulroney was most effective in the traditional Liberal stronghold of Quebec. A native of the province whose mother was French-speaking and a graduate of a French-language law school, he is not only bilingual but speaks French with a local accent. He also took a principled stand against the many anti-French red-necks in his party over a language controversy in Manitoba and offered to be more solicitous toward Quebec's nationalist concerns than had the Trudeau liberals.

As a result, the Tories in Quebec found themselves with the support of the usual assortment of local mayors and chamber of commerce heads smelling a winner and new patronage plums, plus a considerable number of supporters of the separatist Parti Quebecois (PQ), often regarded as social democratic. PQ provincial premier Rene Levesque made no secret of his preference for Mulroney. He has well-

Liberal Party leader John Turner (right) played a major role in the disaster.

Liberal loss shakes up Canada's politics

came his victory as warmly as discretion will allow someone still committed to the dismantling of the political structure Mulroney now heads.

No leftward shift.

Mulroney's victory, then, was rooted in widespread personal antagonism toward Trudeau and his followers, a generalized feeling that it was time for change of personnel. But if the Tory victory seems to have had little to do with a revival of conservatism among the Canadian electorate, neither can the NDP's showing be seen as part of a leftward shift. Much to the suppressed chagrin of many of the socialists in the party, Broadbent ran a campaign that most definitely kept any suggestion of socialism off the agenda. He did stake out a position on women's issues that was much more agreeable to most feminists than the other two, but he concentrated, quiet successfully, on selling himself and the NDP as competent and effective opponents of the representatives of big business—as the party that spoke for "ordinary Canadians," a group he never very clearly defined.

Broadbent avoided the pitfalls of proposing measures that might alienate voters in the middle by abandoning the pretense that the NDP had a chance of forming a majority government. This allowed him to concentrate on a few popular proposals, such as the minimum income tax on the wealthy, and run a campaign that was almost as platitudinous as Mulroney's. Nevertheless, in

the three English-language debates among the leaders, and in particular in the one on women's issues, he seemed to demonstrate a much clearer grasp of whatever issues there were than the other two. And he did much to restore the party's fortunes with his display of intelligence and competence.

But Broadbent's ability to plump for radical programs is limited by much more than political realism or his own moderate inclinations. Now that it looks a little more like a national party than it did a few months ago, the NDP is torn by the same kind of regional conflicts of interest that destroyed the Liberals as a national force and will most certainly cause the Tory majority to creak and weaken from the day they take power.

Like the others, the federal NDP is divided over the issues that divide its Ontario industrial constituency from its Western agricultural and resource-based constituencies. These divisions center on not only basic economic issues such as tariffs, interest rates, industrial strategy and even rail rates, but also on the very nature of the constitution. Many Western NDP'ers have still not forgiven Broadbent for his refusal to support their region's drive for increased provincial rights in last year's new constitution.

For left, right and center, the upcoming sessions of the new parliament should be among the most interesting in Canadian history.

Harvey Levenstein is a professor of history at McMaster University.



IN SHORT

Dennis Banks surrenders

American Indian Movement leader Dennis Banks surrendered to authorities in South Dakota last week after nine years as a fugitive. Banks was convicted of assault and riot charges stemming from a Custer courthouse protest in 1975. He faces a maximum of 15 years on the state charges and another five years on a federal charge of flight to avoid confinement. When Banks fled South Dakota, he said he was afraid that he would be killed in prison there. "Why is he willing to risk his life?" asked Banks' attorney William Kunstler, "because he wants to resume the rest of his life. He's taking an awful chance, one which I have advised against."

Prior to his surrender, Banks lived in the Onondaga Indian nation, a 7,000-acre traditional Indian community in upstate New York. Kunstler said Banks was going stir-crazy at Onondaga where state police refused to seize him under the orders of New York Governor Mario Cuomo. He added it was virtually impossible for Banks to earn a living there. Banks is faced with at least a quarter of a million dollars bail which Kunstler is trying to raise from Marlon Brando and other prominent Indian supporters. Banks has not yet been sentenced and Kunstler says he will appeal the assault and riot convictions.

"I'm not about to surrender my will, surrender my struggle or surrender my principles to the whims of racism in South Dakota," Banks had told a New York City radio talk show host in April. "If a prison guard can kill me and if William Janklow is the governor of South Dakota the prison guard would probably receive a commendation of some sort."

Nicaraguan detente?

The adversarial relationship between the Sandinistas and the Miskito Indians may have eased somewhat in the past few months, reports Katherine Yih. The Miskitos have made moves toward greater political participation in the Nicaraguan government by forming the Organization of Miskitos of Nicaragua—Misatan—to fill the void left by Steadman Fagoth and his followers when they fled to Honduras for counterrevolutionary activity. Misatan intends to rectify some of the government's past mistreatment by reunifying Miskito families separated by their fighting with the Sandinistas and by clearing up the rights to disputed land and natural resources. The group, representing 63 Miskito communities in northeast Nicaragua, also plans to record the experience of Miskitos in the first five years of the revolution in the hopes of curtailing the reports that are used by other countries for anti-Sandinista propaganda.

For their part, the Sandinistas have selected Miskito candidates to run for the National Assembly in November and have appointed a Miskito woman as head of the region with the highest population of Indians. But Indian leader Brooklyn Rivera cautioned against hasty optimism, saying that Managua must first reach an agreement with the Miskitos still fighting the government and must allow the Indians to determine who their own leaders will be. But he added, "We're not separatists, we're Nicaraguans."

Two for Connecticut

Renovation at Connecticut's ornate 105-year-old state capitol took an unexpectedly personal turn last week, report Carole and Paul Bass. It seems that in addition to repairing the roof and improving fire escape routes, some state Democrats want to spruce up the quality of the government beneath the gold dome. Two left political activists took a step toward that goal last week when they scored upset primary victories over conservative Democratic incumbents in the State House of Representatives. Both are now favored to win the general election.

"The message is one that people really believe—they're all a bunch of hacks up there," said nominee Miles Rapoport after his 2,160 to 1,988 primary win in West Hartford. Rapoport stepped down as head of the grassroots Connecticut Citizens Action Group to challenge five-term incumbent Joan Kemler, a member of the entrenched state Democratic Party leadership, on a pro-tax reform, pro-public education platform. And in Danbury, former National Organization for Women state leader Lynn Taborsak edged another member of the conservative Democratic governor's inner circle of legislators, 670 votes to 650.

Says who?

Errant Catholics in Latin America weren't the only ones to receive reprimands from the Vatican this month (see pages 6 and 7). Catholics participating in the broad-based ecumenical sanctuary movement were warned by Father Giulivo Tassarolo, secretary of the Vatican Commission for Pastoral Care for Migrants and Tourists, that harboring undocumented refugees may lead to anarchy because it encourages them to disregard the law. According to one Catholic sanctuary worker, "Once again, the Vatican is trying the old 'pour a bucket of water on the forest fire' approach."

Meanwhile instead of reprimands, the Institute for Policy Studies (IPS) honored the sanctuary movement with its eighth annual Letelier-Moffitt Human Rights Award. The award was partly named after Orlando Letelier, the Chilean ambassador to the U.S. under Allende who was killed by the Pinochet government while working for IPS. Ramon Custodio of the Committee for Human Rights in Honduras was also honored.

—Beth Maschinot

Massacre in El Salvador

SAN SALVADOR—The soldiers swept southwest from Jutiapa, slashing down the peasant cornfields with machetes and smashing the red tile roofs of the huts they passed. This wasn't different from any other army sweep in the zones where the peasants are guerrilla supporters.

This operation, though, was a special mission of revenge. A week before the army had captured a set of guerrilla plans. The plans listed the hamlets that had been used as staging areas for the June 28 attack on the Cerron Grande Dam—an attack which killed more than 100 soldiers.

Now soldiers from San Salvador's Atlacatl Battalion were on a search and destroy mission that would last from July 18 through July 22. The object of their search was the "masas," the peasant supporters of the guerrillas—the FPL guerrilla combatants were away at the time.

Their civilian supporters had been alerted to the army sweep and retreated to hiding places in the creekbeds and gullies to wait out the offensive. This wasn't their first evacuation in the face of the army.

But this time was different. The soldiers knew exactly where they were going. Guided by guerrilla defectors, they went to the ravines where the people were hiding and over the next two days killed more than 60 campesinos, many of them women and children.

At the time of the sweep President Duarte had been in office nearly two months.

Since the Cabanas Massacre in late July, three other massacres have been reported. The army reportedly killed civilians in Las Delicias during another of the periodic sweeps of the Guazapa front. And on August 30 during a sweep of the guerrilla-held eastern Chalatenango province, troops reportedly killed a large number of civilians, possibly more than a hundred, near San Jose las Flores.

The most recent army killing reportedly occurred September 6 during the second phase of the same Chalatenango operation further southeast toward San Antonio de la Cruz. Reporters who tried to verify the massacre were turned back by government troops.

President Duarte claims to have significantly reduced the violence in El Salvador. Yet this wave of reported army massacres raises questions about how much control he really has, assuming he really wants to stop the massacres.



If subminimum wage passes, fast food chains will profit.

Duarte supporters argue that he just needs more time to consolidate his control over the armed forces that have been hostile to him in the past. They say he has taken steps to remove the bad apples from the military but actually he has only blocked the promotion of several connected to death squads.

Although Duarte likes to take credit for removing former Treasury police director Nicolas Caranza who was linked to the death squads, he was actually removed by ex-President Magana before Duarte took office. Likewise two colonels closely linked to the death squads and the ARENA party were also removed by Magana, allowing Duarte to inherit a minimally sanitized military without having to make enemies.

Duarte's major action has been the reorganization of the Security Forces, placing all of them under former national police chief Lopez Nuila who has a reputation as a moderate. Political prisoners in Mariona prison, however, dispute his humanism, saying they were subjected to various physical and psychological tortures by his police.

Duarte also appointed another supposed moderate, Colonel Rinaldo Golcher, to head the notorious Treasury Police and dismantle its hundred-man intelligence unit that functioned closely with the death squads. Golcher was a favorite of Amer-

ican advisors when he headed the national plan in San Vicente. Later he headed a military intelligence unit that many have linked to the CIA.

Duarte's latest move has been the formation of a special commission to investigate five death squad and army killings. Included are the killings of Archbishop Romero, the two U.S. labor advisors killed in the Sheraton Hotel, freelance journalist John Sullivan, members of the Las Hojas Indian cooperative killed by soldiers and another massacre by civil defense in Armenia.

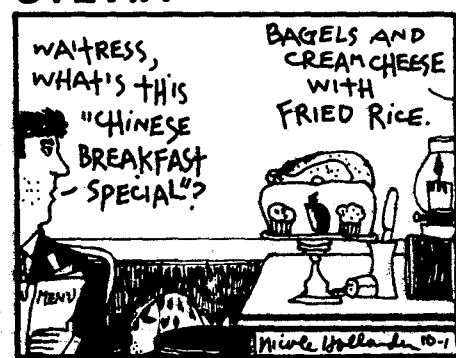
Of the five cases to be investigated, two involve Americans and one other, the Las Hojas case, has received heavy pressure from U.S. congressmembers. Once again Duarte seems to be playing to the all-important American audience.

Significantly absent from the list are military killings of civilians in guerrilla controlled or contested zones. After the July Cabanas massacre was publicized by the Archbishop in a Sunday homily and journalists presented Duarte with a copy of the church's report, Duarte promised to set up another special commission.

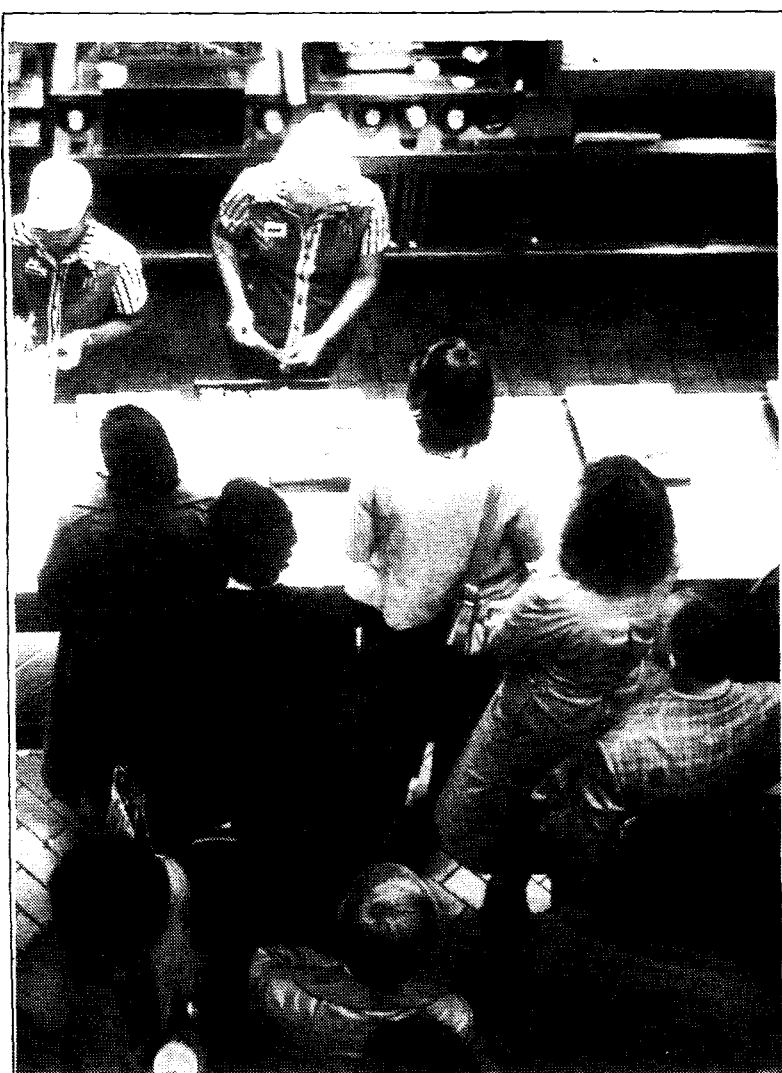
It is firmly in the interests of both Duarte and the Reagan administration to reduce the bad publicity from government massacres. Yet some observers in the countryside believe the killings serve a necessary function in the government's counter-insurgency efforts. "Terror is essen-

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



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Photographer: unknown

tial. They need to hurt the civilian population to reduce the bases of the guerrillas," according to one analyst.

The recurring army massacres also question whether U.S. training is succeeding in professionalizing the Salvadoran army. The Atlactl battalion, the first to be trained by the U.S., was reportedly involved in both the Cabanas and the Chalatenango massacres. Any full investigation of these and other massacres would reveal that killing civilians is common behavior for the battalion.

—Chris Norton

Subminimum wage battle

PHILADELPHIA—"We can't afford a society that pits father against son," declared Representative Bill Gray of Philadelphia. Gray was addressing a newly formed alliance of labor, church, and civic leaders who were voicing their outrage with a long-held Republican Party initiative that once again had raised its ugly head on the national scene—the subminimum wage. Under the leadership of Secretary of Labor Ray Donovan and Senators Charles Percy (R-IL) and Orrin Hatch (R-UT), the current effort to pass S.2687 is expected to be pushed for a floor vote in the Senate in late September, unless opposition forces can muster the necessary votes to block passage.

The heart of the bill is an 85 cent an hour wage reduction during the summer months for workers under 20. For many Americans the proposal has intuitive appeal as a trade-off between the uncomfortable thought of lowered wages in exchange for a program that targets assistance to minority youth. According to the President, the bill would create 400,000 new jobs, inject life into the economy and help mitigate the unemployment problem

among black teens.

But a recent rally against the subminimum wage was held directly in front of McDonald's restaurant here to symbolize who will actually profit and who will lose if the subminimum becomes law. "McDonald's epitomizes the problem of the subminimum wage," said Wendell Young, president of the United Food & Commercial Workers Local 1357. If a lowered wage is allowed, "they are not going to hire any more young kids, they are just going to get them cheaper."

Mildred Jackson, an unemployed mother of three, spoke of the difficulty of finding a worthwhile job in an economic marketplace where unemployment in Pennsylvania is still over 10 percent. "How can somebody support themselves, much less their family, on \$3.35 an hour? Now they want to lower it to \$2.50 for some. It means adults will lose their jobs to teenagers who'll be making less than enough to live on."

Seventy percent of minimum wage workers in America are adults, and 70 percent of those are women. If businesses do hire juveniles at 75 percent of the adult minimum wage, it has been estimated that the fast food industry will reap \$4 billion in profits over the three-year life of the bill. The bill is now known as the "Burger Relief Act" in opposition circles.

The Black Congressional Caucus, Jewish Community Relations Council, NAACP and the AFL-CIO have all opposed the bill. According to Jay Harvey, legislative director for the Food & Allied Service Trades of the AFL-CIO, there is little chance the Subminimum Wage Bill will pass in the House but in the more conservative Senate it's a different story. "Apparently, Secretary Donovan has promised President Reagan he can deliver the vote in the Senate and Chuck Percy believes it will be a beneficial campaign issue for him," said Harvey.

—Allen Hornblum

Briefing: Congress holds the key to a warmer winter

The waning days of summer find Congress and the Reagan administration battling over Low Income Home Energy Aid (LIHEA), a program primarily aimed at assisting the poor to pay upcoming winter heating bills. Within weeks House and Senate votes and a White House decision will climax a confrontation as sultry as a Washington summer.

Congress enacted the original LIHEA legislation in 1980 as a balm for the lapse of oil and natural gas price controls that sent energy costs soaring. Since 1978 (the year regulations went off oil and some gas, and the year before the second oil crisis precipitated by Iran) average heating oil bills have shot up 140 percent, natural gas 134 percent and electricity 67 percent. While the oil and gas industries reaped an estimated \$8 billion from the poor alone in 1979-81, many poor and elderly simply couldn't pay their bills. "Uncollectables" reported by the gas industry grew from \$163 million in 1978 to \$250 million in 1980.

The Congressional Research

requested only a minimum figure of \$1.875 billion.

Despite the billion-dollar debate, average assistance provided in 1983 amounted to only \$212 for an average heating bill of \$505 in California to \$1,736 in Maine. The CRS found that of some 22 million households eligible for the federal program, only a third actually received aid. Reagan's policy of flexible state administration of the program resulted in tighter eligibility requirements and arbitrary regulations that left out many elderly and working poor. In a number of states like Texas, for instance, aid was available only to those on some other kind of assistance program.

After hearing such devastating testimony this spring, both the House and Senate produced bipartisan legislation extending the program three to five years at increased funding levels. Spending would increase from \$2.075 billion in fiscal 1985 to \$2.8 billion in 1988 to offset continuing energy cost increases. (Actual need, according to the Community Action Foun-

states get. "We would end up with no program at all, which is the administration's real purpose," Collins said. While the amendment has lost both in subcommittee and committee, the minority report promises to bring it up again on the House floor.

And at that time the White House will issue a statement of "subtle opposition" to the bill in its present form. The president will support LIHEA with qualifications, according to Ed Dale, Office of Management and Budget spokesman. The administration will ask to use money consumers have paid in oil overcharges to finance the program. "If approved [by Congress] in its present form," Dale said, "White House advisors would recommend disapproval"—perhaps by pocket veto. "The program doesn't have to be reauthorized," he said. "It could be extended with appropriations made on a year-to-year basis."

But the House Appropriations Committee has said it will not appropriate LIHEA funds unless the program is formally reauthorized. House aides also



Steve Kagan

Service (CRS) estimates that lack of heat contributed to some 2,000 deaths in the severe winter of 1983-84. Western and Southern states report similar figures from last summer's protracted heat waves.

In 1981, Reagan's first budget reductions cut LIHEA's original authorization almost in half—from \$3.35 billion to \$1.875 billion—and tied financing to 25 percent of the windfall profits tax. But when the funds finally went out to states, all but 20 percent was used to replace other social services hit by administration budget cuts. The last three years Congress gave up on windfall profit taxes and appropriated close to \$2 billion, ignoring Reagan requests of \$1.3 and \$1.4 billion. With the program due to expire this month, the administration, kicking and screaming about the deficit, has again

reduction, is \$4.6 billion.) Even in face of the deficit, there is a strong feeling in Congress that the current LIHEA has been cut beyond the point of effectiveness.

The administration continues to press the fight, however. After losing in committees in the House and Senate, a Republican minority report to the House calls the suggested increase "a policy of irresponsible and bloated federal spending."

These same Republicans, conservative administration supporters, are also attempting a back-door approach to gut the House bill. Their strategy is an amendment to alter the allocation of funds to the states.

Though her state would benefit from the GOP plan, Rep. Cardiss Collins (D-IL) described it as "a Trojan horse...to pit one member against another" over the amount of funds their

rule out use of oil overcharge funds. "Those funds already belong to the consumer from money they have paid in overcharges," said Kevin Waleck, a staffer on the Energy and Commerce Committee. "The administration would like to use these overcharges for the energy-overcharged poor, putting the regular appropriations into defense. But the committee has said 'no.'"

Though Republicans hold a majority in the Senate, they may be overshadowed by the prominence of liberal sponsors of the legislation—Sens. Robert Stafford (R-VT), Lowell Weicker (R-CT), Thomas Eagleton (D-MO) and Edward Kennedy (D-MA). Together with Democrats on the House side, chances are good for a package that will put the most heat on the administration's cool veto choices.

—Patrick McCaffrey

By David Moberg

CHICAGO

SINCE THE LATE '60S, THE CATHOLIC Church in Latin America has been increasingly revolutionized by followers of "liberation theology." Liberation theologians argue that the message of Jesus and the Bible is that Christians must fight for the "total liberation" of humanity, which means that the Church must take the side of the oppressed—often referred to as a "preferential option for the poor."

Liberation theology has spread to other Third World and some industrialized countries, influenced Protestant theologians and, most of all, inspired creation of new popular "Christian base communities" that encourage the poor to interpret the Bible in a way that encourages them to challenge authority and change society.

Growing discontent among some of the Catholic hierarchy, despite statements from Pope John Paul II seen as sympathetic to parts of liberation theology, led in early September to a report by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, Prefect of the Sacred Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (formerly known as the Holy Office), critical of liberation and to Vatican questioning of a leading representative, Brazilian Friar Leonardo Boff.

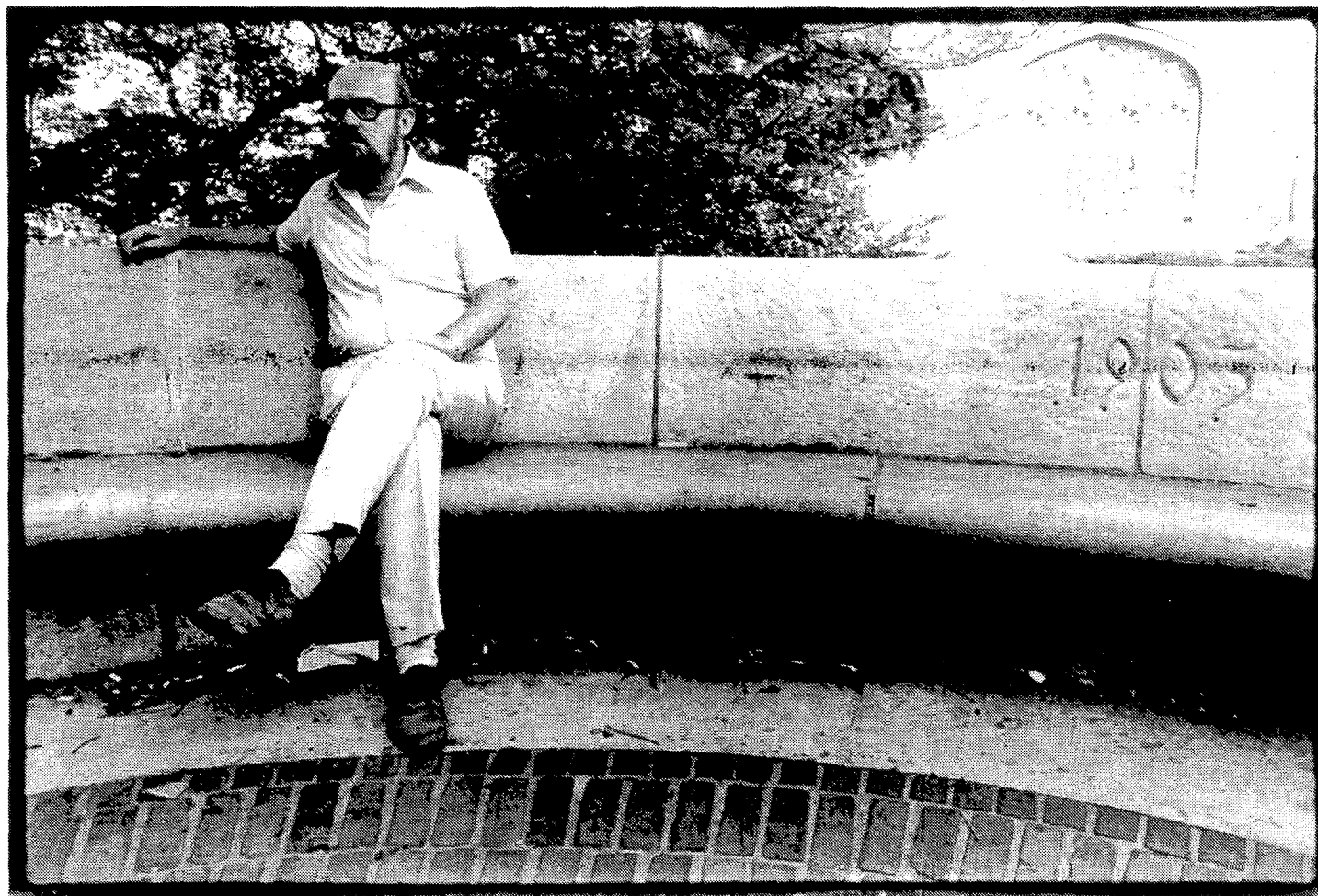
David Tracy, a Catholic priest and professor of theology at the University of Chicago, is a member of the board of Concilium, a worldwide group of liberal



In These Times Graphic

CATHOLIC CHURCH

Priest David Tracy discusses liberation theology dispute



Paul Cornstock

"The document says it is at best dangerous to use Marxist analysis."

Catholic theologians often referred to as the "loyal opposition." A sympathizer with liberation theology despite some criticisms, Tracy discussed the latest controversy with *In These Times*.

Why has this come to a head now? Liberation theology has been developing since the late '60s, especially 1968.

There has been strong controversy and conflict in Latin America since 1968, and it has intensified in the last four or five years. There have been many calls by religious and political conservatives for stopping liberation theology, and there has been much nervousness about these base communities.

What's interesting about this present document is that it is, in my opinion, the strongest document I've seen from the Vatican [in support of liberation theology themes]: the preferential option for the

poor is at the heart of Christian self-understanding and is to be at the heart of Church practice.

What are the objections?

The objections in the document are that it is at best dangerous to use any part of Marxist analysis. [One could] end up accepting the whole package or ideology. Moreover, there is the danger not just of an intellectual ideology but of one, Marxism, which in the regimes where it is practiced has proved to be repressive of basic human freedoms, freedom of speech, religious freedoms.

I do not think that is a correct criticism of any liberation theologians I have read. All of them I've read—which includes Leonardo Boff and [Gustavo] Gutierrez, the founder in Peru, and I know them both personally—are quite clear that what they're doing is Christian theology. They realize that the term a "theology of liberation" would be a self-contradiction to Karl Marx himself. It is intellectually and practically possible—they've done it—to use aspects of Marxist analysis... and not become Marxists.

So the Vatican says the opposite—that you can't use aspects of Marxist analysis and still be a Catholic?

No. It says there is a danger of that occurring. This Vatican document is not—

in spite of some headlines—a condemnation of liberation theology. It is not even a warning. It is an instruction, which raises in its language possible deviations from Catholic faith.

The feeling is Boff went beyond the limits of what's acceptable?

I presume that's the feeling, but we haven't heard exactly the charges or the results of the discussion.

What might that be?

On the basis of his earlier books, Boff is quite clearly and systematically a liberation theologian who believes that the heart of the Christian gospel is liberation. Liberation must be not only in a personal, private sense, not only in terms of a hope for life after death. But if it's true liberation and salvation, it must be involved in the struggle for justice in the social and political order. They choose the word "liberation" to indicate that the struggle must be in this world as well, and that we impoverish and are even in danger of destroying Christian salvation if we make it purely private or purely after this life.

Moreover, he does use Marxist analysis to illuminate cultural realities, including the cultural realities of religion, especially in Latin America, and how one can undo what in their judgment is the fatalism

that has pervaded popular expressions of religion in Latin America. Marxist analysis, including Marxist analysis of religion itself and how it functions, can illuminate this and free the religion itself and make it not merely a cloak for fatalism...but something that liberates, empowers one to struggle against one's society. That would make them nervous.

It struck me that behind all this the authorities may be most concerned that the critique will be turned on the Church itself.

I think you're right—that some are very concerned about that. This recent book of Boff's is the only one that expressly takes that up. Clearly a good deal of nervousness of many Vatican officials is about what will these so-called churches of the people, these base communities—and there are 70,000 in Brazil alone with four million people—what is that going to mean to the present structure of the Catholic Church?

What is interesting about the Brazil situation—where liberation theology is strongest and the country has the largest Catholic population in the world—is that these liberation theologians in base communities and the hierarchy work together very well, although the hierarchy is split like everywhere else.

A person called to such an inquiry is allowed to bring one theologian as a "defense attorney," and two of the Cardinals of Brazil went with Boff. It is very unusual. I can't think of another example.

How would you describe these "base communities"?

They are small groups of Christians—Catholic or Protestant, or sometimes both together—who read the scriptures together and pray together and try to see what those scriptures may have to say for their lives. Insofar as the reading is ordinarily one informed by liberation theology, it obviously leads to a reading of the scriptures that suggests that we should struggle against oppression.

If you think about black spirituals and black gospel music, that's the reading of the Christian gospel of an oppressed people. It's different from the reading by the white slaveholders. And nearly every scholar and theologian would now say it was a far more accurate reading of what, say, Exodus was about.

What is the Vatican trying to accomplish?

They want to make the point that anyone who is involved in liberation theology or who, like myself, is a sympathetic, supportive critic of liberation theology should be more cautious to make sure they do not uncritically use Marxism. If they do, they're headed down the road to buy Marxism *tout court* and, as one of the lines of the [Vatican] document says, they may be struggling for the liberation of the people and yet align themselves with a regime that oppresses the people in new ways.

I don't pretend it's a silly or unintelligible concern. My point is that the liberation theologians have been critical, have been cautious, so I don't see the problem.

Is the structural change of most liberation theologians identified with some brand of Catholic socialism?

Most of them are sympathetic to Latin American forms of democratic socialism that would be analogous to but probably more radical than the left wings of the social democratic parties in Europe.

Where does Nicaragua fit in? Is this a shot banked off Brazil that is aimed at Nicaragua?

I don't know. It's clear the Vatican—and the Pope himself—are troubled as a result of his visit there and reports from current Archbishop Obando y Bravo about possible repression of the Church's activities and basic freedoms of press.

In terms of the Catholic Church [in Nicaragua], there is a radical split, unlike the situation in other countries. Those priests that are part of the current Nicaraguan government are clearly influenced by, and in turn have influenced many Latin American forms of liberation theology.

Continued on page 9

Popular theology under attack

By Cecilio J. Morales Jr.

WASHINGTON

U.S. BLACK AND HISPANIC churchpeople, who see their communities as pockets of the Third World, say that the 36-page document on liberation theology issued two weeks ago in Rome by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger is just one more example of the cultural and political chasm that separates them in outlook from North American and European thought and practice.

The terms of conflict for these minorities differ from those mainstream liberals face. For most white liberal Catholics, the document—officially entitled *Instructions on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation"*—signals an increment in the so-called "chill factor" working in Rome against recent leftward developments in the Church. Two pivotal moves in this direction backed by liberals in the U.S. are the Catholic bishops' pastoral letter on war and peace, and the upcoming pastoral on the American economy, both of which have received discrete demurs from Rome.

While unquestionably well-grounded within the realm of doctrinal Catholic orthodoxy, the bishops' documents and the accompanying activity have seemed to presage the birth of a "peace and justice church" within the main bodies of American Catholicism, integrating the long-standing radicalism of such groups as the Catholic Worker Movement.

"What white liberals see in the nuclear issue is their own annihilation. When you talk about the nuclear issue everybody's life is at stake. But when you talk about justice, only the lives of the poor hang in the balance," says Dr. James Cone, professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York and author of *A Black Theology of Liberation* (1970).

On a global scale, as one senior American cleric puts it, "We are witnessing the difficulties involved in bridging the outlook of Central Europeans at the helm in Rome and non-European communities living in a very different context." But in

growing Hispanic attendance. Many observers believe these incidents reflect the prevailing ethos of petty apartheid in the U.S.

As with the case of Martin Luther King Jr., the church context is becoming a springboard for action to seek redress of grievances. As Cone outlines in his recent *For My People* (Orbis Books), a historical treatment of the black movement, liberation theology has been a Christian articulation of the struggle. "We began liberation theology as an attempt to reconcile Martin and Malcolm—civil rights and black power—in a Christian context," Cone says.

Regarding the Rome document, Cone says, "Most blacks who, like me, are Protestant would see the Vatican's paper like they see the white church establishment in the U.S. They [white clergy] don't want to see a religion that will change social structures."

But in Catholic black circles, theologians have not ventured into liberation theology, he says. "Black Catholics have been especially creative in liturgy rather than in writing theology. Their hierarchy is more likely to accept innovations in worship than in thought."

Nonetheless, six black Catholic bishops are working on their own pastoral statement that would put the needs of the black community on the Church agenda. A source close to the bishops confirmed Cone's analysis, saying, "There's nothing in the black bishops' document that could be attributed to liberation theology."

Grassroots.

As a doctrine, liberation theology has never come from the hierarchy, but from the people. Groups called base Christian communities (CEBs), whose members are usually from the working class, have been thinking about their Christian practice in Latin America and—among Hispanics—in the U.S. for years. Subsequently, theologians have articulated their concerns in print.

Such a process is expressed by Mexican Sister Rosa Martha Zarate's response to the Ratzinger document. She has worked for many CEBs among farmworkers in southern California and in her native Mexico. "This document comes far too late," she says. "The Gospel is already in the hands of the people. For those of us working with the Hispanic farmworkers, the issue is getting the Bible, the Church documents, as well as food, blankets and help in organizing—in brief, the Good News—so that they think for themselves and take responsibility for building a better world."

Zarate points to the work of United Farm Workers' founder Cesar Chavez, who has been preparing for ordination as a Catholic deacon. "The Farm Workers marched with their union emblem and also carried the portrait of Our Lady of Guadalupe. Isn't it odd that the hierarchy condemns liberation theology as Marxist, but they don't worry about missionaries who tell our people to stay out of politics, even though that falsifies the gospel?"

She also cites several examples of the Christian liberation movement's international growth. In September of 1983 the first Latin American gathering of Indian, peasant and urban CEBs took place in Cuenca, Ecuador. Among the delegations from 12 countries—including her own from southern California—were people so poor that they had to walk part of their journey to reach the meeting place, she says.

And yet the movement is discouraged in the Third World, Zarate says. At a pastoral planning conference in Africa she attended recently, a Northern Irish missionary rebuked her for propounding what he called "Marxist liberation theology."

"The problem is that he didn't understand that it was also African theology," she explained. "The whites have always

had a hegemonic control of theology, as well as economic resources. The American continent, and Africa, has awakened. And the U.S. bishops, in their pastoral *The Hispanic Presence: Challenge and Commitment*, ask us Hispanics to strengthen links between Latin America and the U.S."

U.S. liberation theologian Virgilio Elizondo, president of the San Antonio-based Mexican American Cultural Center, a meeting place for several Third World theologians, was more optimistic.

of liberation theology and its application of Marxism.

"We are not doing Marxist theology, whatever that might be. And anyone who says or writes otherwise is engaged in confused thinking," says Cone. Marxist socio-economic analysis, he adds, "has become a useful tool because, unlike other social and economic critiques, it starts from the point of view of the oppressed."

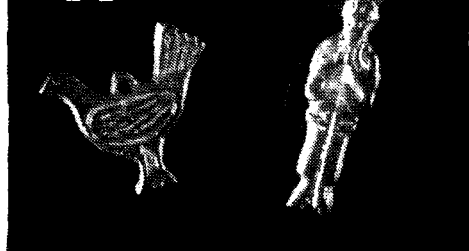
According to Elizondo, another problem—according to the document, the core issue—is the reference to class struggle. In the second paragraph of the ninth section, the document criticizes liberation theology for its examination of reality on the basis of "the theory of class struggle," not "the fact of social stratification with all its inequity and injustice."

But the ultimate issue—at least a cen-



As a doctrine, liberation theology did not come from the hierarchy, but from the people—in the U.S. from the Hispanics.

Marxist analysis is a useful tool because it starts from the point of view of the oppressed.



the U.S. the church conflict is similar to that in the Democratic Party between Walter Mondale and the Rev. Jesse Jackson. Indeed, Cone noted that a group of black liberation theologians held a seminar with colleagues in Havana the same week in June that Jackson's campaign arrived there. The two groups—churchpeople and politicians—met later in the Cuban capital.

Rainbows in the Church.

In the U.S. Catholic Church's black and Hispanic segments, which together make up close to a majority of the faithful, liberation theology has emerged from the racial struggles in and out of parishes. Not long ago, some Catholic churches had separate seating areas for blacks and whites. Also, conflicts resulting in violence have occurred in parishes with a

"This is the strongest official endorsement of liberation theology to come out of the Vatican," he says, pointing out that the Rome document makes extensive use of Vatican II and post-conciliar teaching to demand that theology begin with "an analysis of reality"—a concept he says is the cornerstone of liberation theologians' thought.

"If anything, it challenges Ratzinger and his fellow European theologians, who instead of basing themselves on an examination of reality work on the basis of philosophy and Aristotelian thought," Elizondo says. He found weak points in Ratzinger's *Instructions on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation."* "Unfortunately, there is no footnote, no precise mention of a specific piece of writing. Therefore it is difficult to see exactly what Rome is concerned about," he says. "I tried to compare the criticisms with texts I am familiar with, but found very little that referred to the actual writings. They're taking things out of context."

Sigh of the oppressed.

Asked whether he could identify in the document specific criticisms of his own writings, which include *Christianity and Culture* and most recently *Galilean Journey: the Mexican-American Promise*, Elizondo said he could not.

Conceptually, both Cone and Elizondo disagree with several statements in the Vatican document—primarily with what appears to be the author's understanding of the extent to which Chris-

tians may legitimately make use of Karl Marx' insights without ceasing to be believers. Elizondo believes that it is not necessary to independently rediscover the truths in Marx's work in order to avoid his atheism.

Yet since Pope Leo XIII's social encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, at the end of the last century, and the U.S. bishops' pastoral *On Marxism* in 1968, Marx's atheism has been a major stumbling block to the Vatican. But Marx himself, while critical of Christendom, called religion "the opium of the masses." As the by-laws of the First International were being drawn up, Marx expressly crossed out the requirement that members be atheists, although he did not believe in God.

"The question is whether you can take Marxism in parts or not, and that is a highly debatable issue," Elizondo says. "Certainly the document implies that theology must get to reality through science, but that is not our approach, nor that of St. Thomas Aquinas, for that matter."

Elizondo maintains that the issue is not whether Marxism is scientific—the document implies it is not—but what is the proper relationship between theology and science. "And that reminds me of Galileo, with whom the Church made the mistake of superimposing theology on science."

Cecilio J. Morales Jr. is assistant editor of the *Washington Report on the Hemisphere*, which is published by the Council on Hemispheric Affairs.

LIBBY MITCHELL

Will her issues make a difference?



By Joan Walsh

AUGUSTA, MAINE

ATENDING THE BATH IRON Works (BIW) centennial celebration wasn't quite walking into the lion's den for Democratic Senate candidate Libby Mitchell, though there were plenty of lions there. Her opponent, Sen. William Cohen, was the keynote speaker. The master of ceremonies, BIW president William Haggett, doubles as Cohen's finance officer. The crowd's attire favored Navy brass and the George Bush look.

Everyone listened politely as Cohen, praising the tradition of "Bath-built" battleships, pledged his commitment to a strong Navy, in a typically eclectic speech that managed to invoke Maine Olympic star Joan Benoit and the Korean Airlines disaster (on the eve of that anniversary) within paragraphs. Even the Mitchell entourage clapped for Cohen, a courtesy that seemed very Maine.

Yet even as he applauded, John Portela of the Marine and Ship Workers union was refuting Cohen's happy picture of Bath, Maine's largest single employer with 7,000 workers. "We're doing \$70 million less in defense work here at Bath, and this is while the defense budget is going up," Portela said. "We have 1,400 people laid off. Cohen is chair of the Senate subcommittee on seapower, but he won't scrap to get ships away from Litton down south. He says he'll give us the opportunity to compete for contracts, but nothing more."

At Bath, competition means concessions from labor—Taggett has asked BIW unions to make wage concessions before their contracts expire, against a backdrop of headlines reporting that owner Congoleum Corp. wants to sell the facility, in part because of labor costs. "That's why we endorsed Libby—I don't believe Cohen's position is benefiting workers here," Portela said, hurrying off to introduce the candidate, Maine's first female House majority leader, to Bath workers watching the launching of the frigate Simpson—the last frigate ex-

pected to be made at Bath.

With the Simpson launched, Mitchell's last scheduled event was the post-launch reception at the Brunswick Naval Yard. Her campaign manager Greg Nadeau advised against attending. That was the real lion's den—naval officers, Bath management and Cohen's entourage, with few likely supporters among them. "Sometimes those events are the most fun," she suggested. But in the end, she opted for a chili and beer party for her enthusiastic staff, which hadn't gathered socially since the campaign got underway in March.

■ ■ ■
Anyone will tell you that Maine is not a very ideological state, but no one can say whether that will hurt or help Mitchell in her bid to unseat Cohen. The Maine electorate is split in thirds—just more than 30 percent are registered Democrats, about the same number call themselves Republicans and a plurality are registered independents.

Its Republicans are fairly liberal; its Democrats usually moderate to conservative. Plant closing legislation, for instance, a polarizing issue in most states, passed a Republican-controlled Senate. Maine's House Representatives, Olympia Snowe and John McKernan, are liberal Republicans when placed on the national spectrum.

But Cohen is particularly well crafted. He made a national reputation in 1973 as the first Republican Congressman to call for Richard Nixon's resignation. Socially liberal—he favors the ERA and abortion rights and has a strong environmental record—he is fiscally more conservative, although he recently tempered his early support for the Reagan budget with votes to reinstate funding for several anti-poverty programs. He is nationally known as the sponsor of the build-down, the plan to retire two weapons systems for each new one built, which the Reagan administration has advanced as its alternative to the nuclear freeze.

All that adds up to a Senate seat the Republicans consider "under control." But while Mitchell is clearly an under-

dog, most observers believe anything can happen to a seat that has been volleyed between the parties since Democrat Bill Hathaway upset Margaret Chase Smith in 1972.

It's taking nothing from the politically skilled Cohen to note that the one-term incumbent had an incredibly lucky year in 1978, when he defeated Democrat Bill Hathaway by a large margin. That year's hottest issue was the Dickey-Lincoln hydroelectric plant, a project pushed by Democrats since the New Deal that grew increasingly unpopular in the state as its considerable environmental impacts became known. Hathaway maintained his support for the project, while Cohen opposed it and managed to capitalize on the statewide movement against it.

There were other breaks that went against Hathaway. In mid-campaign the Carter administration Justice Department urged the state to settle with an Indian tribe that had brought a land claim to court. (Cohen insinuated that the Democrats would cave in to the land claim and ran ads showing a divided state, one half labelled "Indian Maine.")

Even the Panama Canal treaty became an issue, with veterans' groups abandoning Hathaway, himself a veteran, because he voted for the agreement. "Cohen had everything that year," says Mitchell press secretary Bill Frederick, who did the same job for Hathaway. "But now the issues are against him."

Chief among the issues the Mitchell camp believes can defeat Cohen is the nuclear freeze, passed by 88 percent of Maine town meetings held to debate the issue. Mitchell's advertising hammers away at Cohen's sponsorship of the build-down and opposition to the freeze and his votes in favor of the MX, B-1 bomber and nerve gas production. In response, Cohen ads have sought to portray the senator as a disarmament proponent who seeks to go beyond the freeze and dismantle the nuclear arsenal with build-down. But the ads make the strategic error of putting Cohen on television acknowledging his opposition to the freeze, a boost to the Mitchell campaign. "Before that, most people thought he was for the freeze," said Nadeau.

Maine Freeze Voter '84 coordinator Alan Caron, formerly head of the state's nuclear referendum committee, believes the freeze can pay off as Mitchell's chief issue. Already Freeze Voter's canvass has identified 7,000 people who say a candidate's position on the freeze will determine their votes, and another 1,000 who want to volunteer for pro-freeze candidates. "It's a high intensity issue here, and I think that intensity decides people's votes," Caron said.

Mitchell's other notable stance is her refusal to accept Political Action Committee (PAC) contributions, a position that has attracted national press, most of it respectful but condescending. Locally, the stance is taken more seriously, if only because Cohen has so clearly benefited from PAC largesse—\$20,000 from large defense contractors, \$10,000 from investment interests, for a total of \$80,000 in PAC contributions in all. But the pledge has meant she has had to rely on individual donors and small fundraisers, and a shortage of money has hampered her organizational effort around the state. So far she has raised \$270,000, while Cohen is expected to collect \$1 million.

Choosing issues.

Mitchell's conscience and political background has shaped her choice of campaign issues, but so has careful scrutiny of Cohen's record. Facing an incumbent with a fairly moderate image, Mitchell has found in the nuclear freeze and PACs two issues that place her in starkest contrast with Cohen.

"Maine is a state where people like their politicians," says Mitchell. "They really don't vote against an incumbent unless they're given a reason, unless he's really not representing their interests."

Her choice of issues also reflects the advice of her pollsters, Richard Morris and Eileen McGann. It's not just that the pair have found high anti-nuclear and anti-PAC sentiment in Maine (though

they say they have). Mitchell's campaign emphasis is also shaped by their theories about voters' reactions to women candidates and how women can use those stereotypes in their favor.

In interviews with more than 10,000 voters across the country, the pair has asked a set of questions designed to gauge attitudes toward women in politics. Dividing respondents by sex, then separating sexist from non-sexist voters (on the basis of their views about the ERA), McGann and Morris have found that voters overwhelmingly share common beliefs about men and women politicians' strengths and weaknesses. All believe women are more compassionate, honest and opposed to war. All think men are more logical and well-informed about public issues. The widest divergence in belief among the four groups has been 5 percent, almost insignificant statistically.

Thus they believe women candidates succeed when they focus on issues that the public is predisposed to believe they handle better than men. Using Geraldine Ferraro as an example, Morris believes her value to the Democrats lies in the fact that "voters who are upset about Reagan slashing the budget, or leading us into war, will look to a woman."

In advising Colorado Senate candidate Nancy Dick, they encouraged an emphasis on abortion—as a compassion issue—and the nuclear freeze. And both believe Mitchell's anti-PAC, pro-freeze stands can capitalize on the public's readiness to turn to a woman for political honesty and efforts to prevent war.

McGann believes Mitchell has another advantage as a woman: "She personifies our positive stereotypes of women. She's very nice, her genuine concern for people comes through. Women always have to reach voters one-to-one, to win them over on the basis of personality traits. Libby gets over that first hurdle very well."

But distressingly, one of Mitchell's toughest hurdles thus far was obtaining the endorsement of the National Organization for Women (NOW). It was a struggle that never should have been—both sides agree Mitchell's record on women's rights couldn't be better. But NOW believes that with her emphasis on her main campaign themes, feminist concerns have been muted, rarely mentioned.

Mitchell bristles at real or implied criticism that she's not sufficiently a feminist to win NOW's backing. She points to her voting record on issues from gay rights to rape laws to programs for welfare-depen-

dent mothers. "I can't believe they won't get in there behind a Democratic woman Senate candidate who's running against a man who has voted for Reagan's budget cuts, just worsening the feminization of poverty," she says.

Maine NOW's Christine Torraca says the group wasn't asking Mitchell to stress its issues, just mention them. "Which she wasn't doing. We know she supports our issues, and that she has to highlight how she differs from Bill Cohen. But she would do things like give a wonderful economic equity speech to a displaced homemakers' group, then not even mention the ERA," which is on the ballot this November in Maine. "We're not a freeze group—we're an organization advocating women's rights and we have to see something for our endorsement."

In the end, Maine NOW recommended in early September that the national group endorse Mitchell. But there was an element of resignation in the decision. "It didn't appear as though she or her campaign were going to do what we were asking," Torraca says. "But we wanted to help her win, and defeat Bill Cohen." Torraca pauses. "I still think she's afraid of being labelled a feminist."

If that assessment isn't entirely fair, it's not entirely wrong, either. Labels, Continued on the following page

84 CAMPAIGN

Mitchell

Continued from the preceding page

whether "feminist" or something else, mediate a voter's reaction to a candidate, and Mitchell's best asset is her direct, personal approach to individuals. Charisma is probably too weak a word to describe her appeal. She shared a platform in Portland with Ferraro September 8, and by all accounts upstaged the vice presidential nominee, herself no insignificant presence. At a small town meeting for Mitchell's campaign the next night, 50 people showed up to volunteer and more than half said they'd been spurred by Mitchell's appearance with Ferraro.

To this point, her campaign strategy has been to blanket the state with TV ads—relatively cheap at \$2,700 for 30 seconds prime time—and the candidate herself, to reach as many people personally as possible. It's a relatively small electorate—500,000 people—but a fairly large state. Her campaign schedule is grueling.

Labor Day weekend at the Windsor Fair, one of many dozens she'll attend this campaign, Mitchell was more at home than at the Bath Iron Works celebration the day before. Windsor, part of her House district, is heavily Republican, but it has voted repeatedly to reelect her. Many voters say she's the only Democrat they've ever cast a ballot for.

She walked the fair booths shaking hands, greeting people she knew and introducing herself to people she didn't. Beside her was Christine Burke, a young nurse, wife and mother who is running to fill the House seat Mitchell will vacate in November. Mitchell introduced Burke to district voters, and if she found a booth that Burke had missed, she left the House candidate's literature there as well as her own.

Two booths down from the Democrats' cubicle was the Republicans' Mit-

chell stopped by to chat with the party faithful behind the booth as she made her rounds. In her wake I tried to gauge their assessment of her candidacy.

State Sen. Charlotte Sewall gave her mixed reviews. She immediately punched out the Republicans' stock response to Mitchell: she's not on the Democratic National Committee's list of favored races, thus even her own party doesn't take her seriously. But her more considered response painted Mitchell as more formidable, a candidate that Cohen must take seriously.

"And I think he is," she said. "He's going around lobbying for support—he lobbied hard for the League of Conser-

vation Voters endorsement he got yesterday." (The endorsement, which bucked the tide of Maine environmentalists favoring Mitchell, was widely denounced as out-of-state interference, and is probably best understood as the result of a non-partisan group looking desperately for one Republican to endorse.)

Although Sewall considers herself "to the left" of the Reagan administration, she believes the top of the ticket will bode well for Maine Republicans, including Cohen. "But you never can tell," she said. "There's one thing Libby has in common with Reagan, and that's a lot of charm."

of heresy or having committed heresy. They are very orthodox Catholic theologians. They tend to be critical of what they call bourgeois liberal theologians like myself who tend to be critical of intra-Church issues, like birth control, the role of women and celibacy for priests. But ones like Boff and Gutierrez agree now that we bourgeois liberals have been right on the issue of women.

Is there any dominant trend in the development of liberation theology?

The major change has not been in the understanding of the content of Christian redemption as meaning social, political and economic liberation. What has changed is that the "base communities" have grown, grown, grown. The liberation theologians are highly educated, European-educated academics who had been themselves changed in moving out of the academy into the base commun-

ities. That has changed their theology in style and mode of expression, not in terms of its basic content but in the theologians' own understanding of his or her role.

It is an extraordinary phenomenon. The Latin American Church, in its previous history, was not an institution that fought for the poor. It's a phenomenon not unlike what it must have been like in Germany before the Reformation.

That may be the thinking in the Vatican?

I am sure there are many in the Vatican who are beyond nervous about what this could mean. Whatever is happening, it is different from the struggles that took place earlier in the European Church. You'd have to go to the left wing of the Reformation to find this insistence that the Christian commitment involved this actual struggle against oppression. In the Catholic case that [the social justice tradition] could be kept intellectually distinct from the heart of theology and the understanding of salvation, revelation and liberation. With liberation theology that easy distinction has broken down.

It's not just the Vatican that is concerned. It has been claimed that there have been sponsorings of American fundamentalist groups indirectly by the American government in countries like Guatemala. If you could have Christianity take the form of an apolitical fundamentalism as distinct from this now fairly dangerous and explosive option for the poor, you're not going to have the kind of social and political unrest among religious persons you have otherwise.

Tracy

Continued from page 6

What do you think the impact of the Vatican action will be? Will it slow development of liberation theology or lead to a schism?

It could become an occasion for the political and religious right wing to pretend—which the document does not support—that we now have a condemnation of liberation theology and that we all now know that these are at best unwilling dupes of Marxist movements. That has to be fought. If that occurred, there would be great difficulties.

Are there any other theological issues at stake here?

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By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

ON SEPTEMBER 8 PRESIDENT Ronald Reagan devoted his weekly radio broadcast to championing "excellence" in the schools. As has been the case, his approach to excellence consisted in uttering the kind of nostrums that graduation speakers at junior high schools like to spout.

In the broadcast, Reagan, who watches several hours of TV drama each night and who praised television as a "good neighbor" that takes the place of the extended family, admonished America's children not to watch too much television. "Time given to a television show that ought to be given to a school book is time badly used," he said.

But Reagan's constant references to the need for excellence in education play upon an anxiety that most Americans feel about our schools. That anxiety was articulated in the April 1983 report of the Reagan-appointed National Commission on Excellence in Education. The acclaim that greeted the report convinced the Reagan administration to preserve the Department of Education and to make education a central issue in the 1984 campaign.

The Reagan Commission report warned that "the educational foundations of our society are being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a nation and as a people." And it went on to say: "We live among determined, well-educated and strongly motivated competitors. We compete with them for international standing and markets, not only with products but also with the ideas of our laboratories and neighborhood workshops. America's position may once have been reasonably secure with only a few exceptionally well-trained men and women. It is no longer."

The report urged, among other things, that schools raise their requirements in basic subjects, lengthen their school year, give "far more homework" and offer financial incentives (including "merit pay") to attract and keep outstanding teachers.

The Commission's warnings and recommendations were subsequently echoed by a host of other prestigious commissions and panels, including ones established by the Carnegie Foundation and the Twentieth Century Fund. While some groups have taken exception to specific recommendations that are being made—for instance, the teachers' unions have opposed merit pay—both party platforms and major candidates have quoted with approval the thrust of the report.

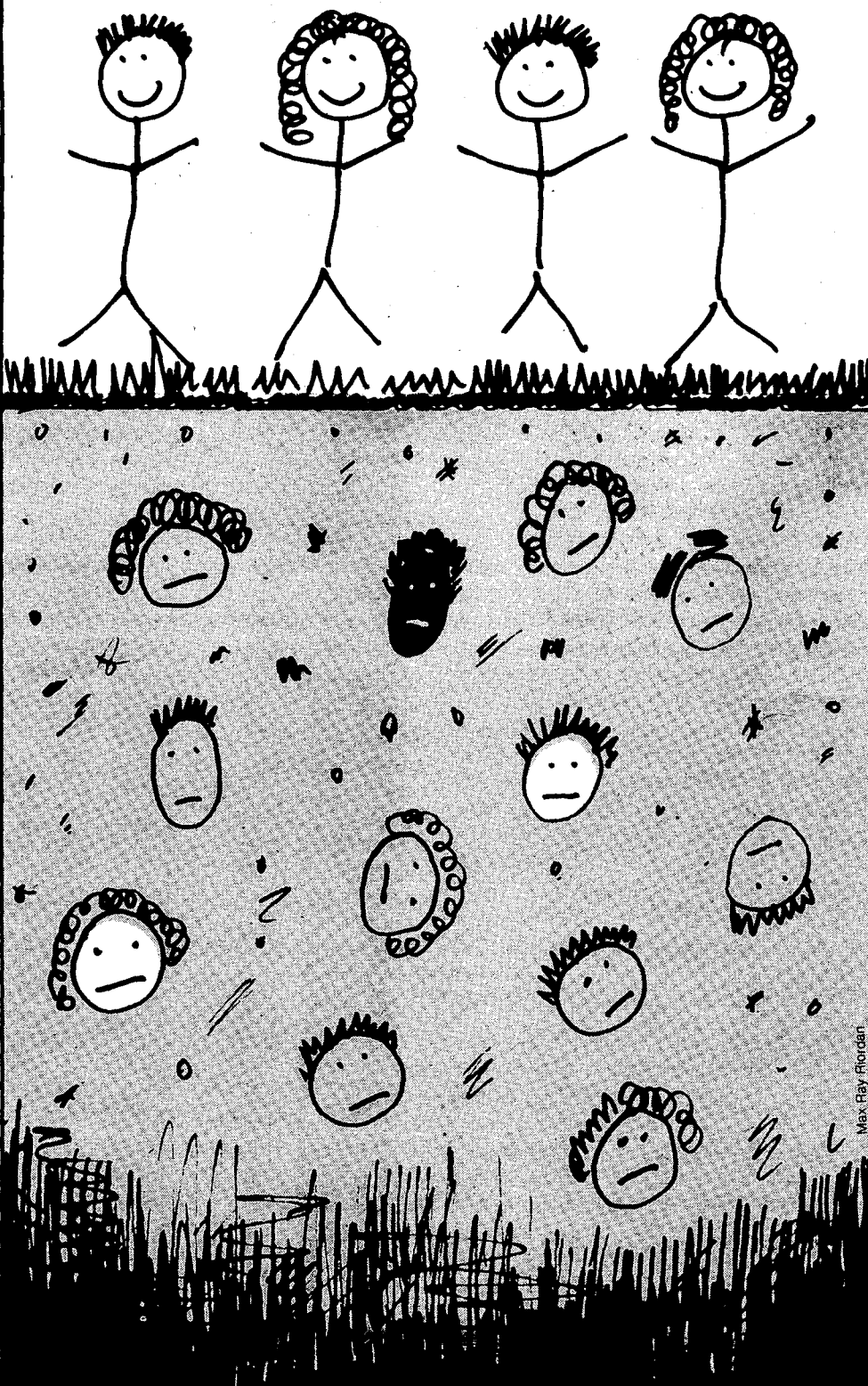
But there is another way to understand the state of American education. In the following interview, Christopher Lasch, professor of history at the University of Rochester and author of *The Culture of Narcissism* and the forthcoming *The Minimal Self: Psychic Survival in Troubled Times*, does not deny that American education is in dire straits, but he rejects the perspective from which the commissions and politicians have analyzed it.

Do you agree with the Reagan Commission's contention that our educational system is beset by a "rising tide of mediocrity"?

Yes. There is no question that something is radically wrong with public education in the sense that people aren't learning much. But when you hear that rhetoric about excellence, you should be on your guard right away because it is associated with a long-term attempt to reform the schools that goes back to the '50s. Then they were worried about Sputnik. Now they're worried about competition from Germany and Japan. But notwithstanding these periodic cries of mediocrity, they are proposing very superficial reforms. In fact, if you read that report, you'll find out they are not that serious about excellence.

What are they serious about?

In a sense, it is not a serious report. If you compare this latest series with the kind of reports that were being done in the '50s, say by Admiral Hyman Rickover, that were advancing similar sorts



WASTED MINDS

Report promotes dual educational system, says Lasch

of criticisms from a similar point of view—that is, basically technocratic—you'll find that the '50s critics were much more candid.

Rickover frankly believed in a dual system of education, one for the elite and the other for the rest of us. He at least had the merit of offering a solution appropriate to the problem being described, which was to create a technical elite. These people aren't even going that far. It is only rhetoric—talking about lengthening the school year and merit [pay] raises. The educational proposals actually made in that Reagan report are laughable.

For instance, they recommend two years of a foreign language for people going on to college. They don't even indicate that it should be a requirement, whereas the societies they are trying to compete with have foreign language as part of their curriculum practically from kindergarten.

Do they misunderstand the purpose of

education?

Their purpose is very narrow indeed. It is how to train technicians in order to develop a "high-tech" society.

What should be the purpose of education?

It has become more and more difficult to conduct that kind of discussion. Even if you talk about education in broader terms—creating critical citizens—you're in danger of forming a very instrumental, utilitarian notion of what education is all about.

Our ideas of education come out of a tradition, ultimately a classical tradition, restated in the Renaissance, and restated again as part of our republican ideology. Education is understood as part of an educated conception of politics itself. Politics is based on citizenship, and education is conceived of basically as a moral enterprise designed to instill in citizens qualities of character and judgment. Once that is gone, and once you develop a highly instrumental conception of pol-

itics, the ideological justification of general education is no longer apparent.

And so these reports reflect a different view of politics as well?

There is a view of politics that is implicit in these reports that politics, too, like everything else, is best conducted by an educated technical elite and the process works best when popular participation is at a minimum. Again, in the '50s, that conception of politics was very open, and some people were willing to admit that there really wasn't any need for popular education or political participation.

Why aren't people learning in the schools today?

Broadly speaking, they are not learning anything because there is no longer any need for them to learn anything. That is, there is no longer an important need either for an educated citizenry or for a lot of skilled workers. What our society seems

"People aren't learning anything because there's no longer any need for them to learn anything."

to need is a largely passive population, only marginally educated.

Beyond that, one could talk more specifically about the custodial function of schools. Then, of course, there is the deplorable state of the teaching profession itself—low morale, terrible training and the grip of credentialism. Those are fairly familiar reasons. They are true, although they are secondary.

But what the experts on education and the politicians seem to be saying is that everyone now needs to learn to design computers.

If you look at job projections, it is pretty clear we are not going to need a lot of computer specialists. There will be jobs, but the number of unskilled jobs will far outrun the need for specialists.

In that sense, what the commissions are complaining of could be dealt with fairly easily through the addition of special technical schools in major cities. These schools could provide a sufficient number of technicians and the rest of the schools could just go to hell.

Yes, of course. What isn't easy about that is that it would represent a very explicit departure from precedent. There is a lot of residual resistance to abandoning a system of common schools where everyone gets the same education. There is a feeling that education ought to be democratic.

Lasch's comments on education deserve two footnotes. First, his charge that the commission reports are proposing implicitly—or confusedly—the kind of dual education openly advocated in the '50s is borne out by an examination of detailed policy analyses making the rounds of the Republican right.

In the wake of the Reagan Commission report, the Heritage Foundation published a "background" on "Closing the Math and Science Gap." The Heritage analysis complains that "for the past 20 years, federal mandates have favored the disadvantaged pupils at the expense of those who have the highest potential to contribute positively to society." It proposes that the administration "focus its limited resources on defining and encouraging excellence."

Second, Lasch points out that the key educational issue is not tuition tax credits, busing, merit pay or whether computer education will enhance our strategic capability; it is what the purpose of education should be, and more broadly, what our own purpose as a people is. By undercutting the current debate, Lasch shows the extent to which Americans' current obsession with "decline" is itself a cause of decline.

By Mary Ellen Schoonmaker

JERSEY CITY

ELAINA BUGG SPENT HER FIRST four years as a teacher in a closet. The day she was hired in 1979, full of hope and promise, she began teaching English to foreign students in a three-by-five-foot cloakroom in one of this city's run-down elementary schools. Things were so cramped there was only space for six children at a time, and some of the older boys were already built "like men."

All together, she taught in four or five different closets, moving each time she found one that was a little bigger than the previous one. Sometimes she felt more like a sandhog than a teacher, and she came to be thankful for small things, such as a slit of a window. "The brighter the room, the better I felt," she said.

In the fall of 1983 she was transferred to another school and now she has an airy room with plant-lined windows. She still teaches English to students who don't understand much of what she is saying, and she doesn't understand them. Last spring one boy from China was so scared that his knees shook in class, and she communicated with him mostly through smiles and pats on the shoulder.

But if her faith in a school system that puts its newest, most optimistic members to work in closets has been shaken, her faith in the children has not. Her biggest job, she says, is getting across her confidence in them. "The best language tool is to get them to talk about themselves. I'll ask them for a word to describe their feelings and they're so quick to come up with something negative—some of them have been told for years that they're dumb and stupid. A lot of teachers don't gear themselves to kids' self-esteem."

Bugg, a calm black woman who enrolled in college when her youngest child started school, studied teaching in an experimental program at Jersey City State College, a much more rigorous program than the college's normal education major. She was a student teacher for two and a half years—not the traditional six or 12 weeks—in a large public school, School 15, in one of the city's poorest neighborhoods. In a type of total immersion process, she went from working with individual children, then small groups, to teaching a whole class.

The Alternative Teacher Training Program, as it was called, had about 30 graduates from 1979 on. It was based on the premise that a person needs special skills to teach in an urban school, perhaps the most important skill being the ability to keep trying.

When I first met some of the student teachers in the program in 1981, I was

"Bureaucrats don't support creativity. No one has an entree because of excellence."

impressed by how mature and confident they seemed compared to other education majors I'd met, who tended to view places like School 15 as assignments they would take on only in their nightmares. Here was a program turning out dedicated teachers specially equipped to take on the challenge of Jersey City's schools. In light of recent efforts to ease teacher training requirements—New Jersey and about a dozen other states have plans in the works to bypass education courses in their search for new teachers—I wondered how the program was doing. Teacher training is held in such low regard these days that a lot of people think you make a better teacher without it.

There's some truth to that: I've sat in on education courses where the day's topic was how to look mean or why teaching is fun. But, given these new non-requirements, which make it seem like anyone can teach, how many of the new

WASTED MINDS

Teaching is political in Jersey schools

recruits will want to prove themselves in difficult situations, in ghetto schools in burned out neighborhoods? I had the suspicion that the Jersey City State College program was out of step with the times, that learning to teach in urban

other school district.

It's hard to say who is at fault. The tragedy is that some of the most educated college education majors, for whatever reasons, were not used where they were desperately needed. Today, one is a state



schools was fast becoming a dying art. Unfortunately, I was right.

In fact, the program doesn't exist anymore. Joelna Marcus, a former coordinator of the program, said there were not enough students applying to keep it going. Most students at Jersey City State need to work to pay tuition, she said, and the program's long hours usually precluded an outside job.

Even more disappointing, only a handful of graduates teach in the Jersey City system. Predictably, some decided teaching in a public school, or teaching, period, was not for them. Some who originally wanted to work there decided the Jersey City system was not for them. And a few, like Elaine Bugg, are there only because of remarkable determination.

Annie Graham, a fifth-grade teacher at School 15 and one of the few graduates who got a job and a full-time class in the city system, said she and her friends believed all along they would have jobs waiting for them when they graduated, but it didn't happen. She believes that the college could have done more to help place them.

Marcus blames the Byzantine politics of the Jersey City school system, saying she also thought jobs would be waiting. She is angry about it, and if the program ever started up again, she'd suggest the students work with the Newark schools instead. "We felt we belonged in Jersey City because the college is here, but there's a point at which you say they don't want us. Bosses in inner cities don't want teachers who know what they're doing."

But another college official, who said there had never been any guarantees made by the city, had a more diplomatic view. "Bureaucrats don't tend to support creativity. No one has an entree because of excellence. You're admitted because you fit the mold, the pattern of the bureaucracy." In that regard, the official said, Jersey City is no worse than any

trooper, another works for an airline. How many inner-city schools can go hunting for promising teachers, much less find them? Here was a case where such teachers were right in a district's backyard. What happened to some of the program's graduates says a lot about urban education today—about school systems that defeat their own purposes and about promise unfulfilled.

It's who you know.

Jersey City is the second largest city in the state and the seat of Hudson County, where machine politics and government by favor can sometimes turn into government by felony. In nearby Union City, for example, former Mayor William Musto was forced to step down in 1982 when he was convicted on federal racketeering charges, along with a former school board president and a deputy police chief. One day after being sentenced to prison for seven years, Musto was re-elected mayor. When the state Supreme Court threw out the election, he hand-picked a successor, who, just four months later, was convicted of a bid-rigging scheme to sell motor oil, toilet paper and other supplies to the county vocational school.

Musto's control of Union City may have been extreme, but it is not atypical of Hudson County politics. In Jersey City and several other towns in Hudson County, who you know is what counts in getting a public job, and who you support is what counts in keeping it.

In 1981 a county grand jury presentment disclosed a school board enemies list in Jersey City in which nontenured teachers who campaigned for former state senator Walter Sheil's unsuccessful mayoral bid were targeted for dismissal. People who supported the winner, reform candidate Gerald McCann, were given some priority in hiring, the grand jury said. About 50 people were demoted or fired by the board of education that

McCann appointed shortly after he took office. The board's actions were so blatantly political that most of the people who lost their jobs gained them back, at the cost to the school system of more than half a million dollars in legal fees, settlements and other expenses, according to the local *Jersey Journal*.

Observers say board of education meetings are mainly taken up by matters related to job, promotions, transfers, litigation and contracts. "Very little, if any, attention is placed on educational matters," a school board employee told the *Jersey Journal*.

Some graduates of the Jersey City State College program believe that they would have fared better if they had known the right people.

"If you know somebody who knows somebody, it's an easy slide," said Mary Ann Latoraca, who graduated in 1982.

Eighty percent of the city's public school students are black or Hispanic.

She was hired as a "pool sub," a roving substitute teacher, and she worked in the Jersey City school system for one-and-a-half frustrating years, teaching classes for days, weeks or a few months at a time, until she quit last winter to teach in a local Catholic school.

A young woman with a brusque manner, she said she never would have left if she had been given her own class for the full year. "I went to school to teach, not to babysit." As it was, she felt like she was always starting or finishing somebody else's work, and the whole experience seems to have soured her on the public schools she worked in. "I had first graders kicking and cursing me. There is no morale. Many of my friends hate it. Teachers asked me what I was doing there, why wasn't I in computers?"

In contrast, she has nothing but praise for her parochial school students, who are more motivated, and for the teachers she works with, who come and ask her for advice.

Looking back, Joelna Marcus said she never told her students in the program it would be easy, but she didn't train them to be substitutes. She encouraged Latoraca to leave the Jersey City system. "She was trained to make kids feel good about themselves," Marcus said, but because she was a sub, handling other teachers' discipline problems, "she was not being allowed to do that."

If teachers in inner-city schools are to reach children, Marcus said, they need time to figure the kids out. Marcus started teaching in an elementary school in a tough section of Brooklyn in the late '50s, and what she remembers of two boys who were her students there has done much to shape her philosophy of teaching. One, Rafael, had run away from home, yet he still came to school every day. Soon after she found out, he stop-

Continued on page 22

In the last year and a half there has been a great outpouring of concern about high schools. First an avalanche of words cascaded down, and now a blitz of school-reform proposals is sweeping the map.

Legislation reform schemes and decrees appear almost daily as governors, state commissioners and citizens' groups scurry to draft guidelines and proposals. Teachers, hunkered down with students in the schools, hear the approaching roar yet remain baffled and hesitant, not clear on the direction and meaning of the biggest frenzy for school reform since the Soviets launched Sputnik in 1957.

The Education Commission of the States counted 275 state task forces working on education reform in the past year. Overwhelmingly, the interest lies in secondary schools. And, in one way or another, most reform books and proposals reaffirm the still-visionary ideal of giving a decent high-school education to every citizen. They insist, with varying degrees of realism, that there need not be a contradiction in offering high-quality education and promoting equality—that, in the current lingo, equality and “excellence” are compatible.

Reformers point to the wretched and demoralizing conditions of work for teachers, and to the lousy pay. They deplore the way that teachers and students in many schools have negotiated what can be called the “Treaty of Hasslefree”—low teacher demands in exchange for student docility. All speak of the need to bring professionalism back to teaching. And many agree that the high-school academic experience is too fragmented and that students are not learning to use their minds well.

The criticisms make sense and the goals sound good. Above all, the shared sense that change is necessary creates the best opportunity for real improvement in education in a generation.

But on the local and national levels the reform movement is still groping for a meaning of “excellence” that goes beyond the quick fixes and a heavily quantitative approach to education. Everywhere there are lofty goals—learning to learn, and the like—coupled with narrow measures: revised graduation requirements, new systemwide standards on tests, more homework, longer school hours, dubious schemes of pay based on teachers' performance, career ladders, merit pay for a handful of teachers, and so on. All these are easy to enact in aroused state legislatures, and end up being largely irrelevant to good teaching and sound learning.

It may surprise some reformers to

learn that the spirit lurking behind the bottom line of this initial wave of reform in the name of “excellence” remains Mr. Gradgrind, the utilitarian capitalist in Charles Dickens' novel *Hard Times*. Mr. Gradgrind runs a school as one would a factory. He manages both by identical principle and calls the children by numbers instead of names, insisting on a curriculum of measurable “facts, facts, facts.” Everything in Gradgrind's world is controlled from the top. “You are not to wonder,” he warns the children.

Like the disastrous American capitalists of recent decades who pursued short-term profits and failed to invest in their own country, Gradgrind works by a calculus of immediate self-interest—from the hand directly to the mouth. He is indifferent to the intrinsic values of education, failing to understand that the aim is to produce people with a lifelong hunger for learning.

Gradgrind's presence in current educational reform takes many forms: a heavily quantitative definition of education, reducing the whole complex art to scores on standardized tests; a misguided faith



in the idea that there is one “best” system of learning and teaching; a delusion that teachers can be disciplined to act as cogs in the great school machine, like workers in an old-fashioned factory; an erroneous assumption that students are merely passive recipients of learning; and the most enduring delusion, the idea that the Gradgrinds outside the schools can improve them without taking the trouble to enlist classroom teachers in the cause.

There is, however, another note in the reform conversation. Those who sound it carry much less clout than the Gradgrinds. So far, they have few battalions in the reform armies.

One hears this minor note in two different places these days. One hears it in the most thoughtful of the current studies of high school—Ernest Boyer's *High School*, Sara Lightfoot's *The Good High*

School, John Goodlad's *A Place Called School*, TheodoreSizer's *Horace's Compromise*, and the forthcoming *An Education of Value* by Marvin Lazerson, Judith Block McLaughlin, Bruce McPherson and Stephen K. Bailey. And one hears it in conversations with thoughtful teachers, principals and other school people.

This set of voices agrees that high-school students need to be more intellectually engaged, but holds, perhaps unpopularly, that the individual school has to be the locus of any real improvement. Top-down reform can't set the climate, the ethos of a school, because it is a local matter and always the most decisive educational reality. The essential job of reform, in this view, is to empower principles and teachers at the school level. The practitioners dealing with the students need autonomy and support within a framework of a set of goals and a system of accountability that makes sense and honors a vision going beyond quantitative test scores alone.

The minor reform voices are going beyond the limited vision of test scores and narrowly defined basic skills to talk about how students' minds work and how skills are used—the point of “excellence.” They say it is wrong to think of students as passive, or teachers as cogs in the school machines. They respect teachers as professionals in a difficult job. At its best, this strain of reform is trying to recreate schools and classrooms as communities of learning that maintain a dialog between students and teachers, rather than the “I talk, you listen” pedagogy that today predominates in too many schools, especially in the lower tracks.

TheodoreSizer's book *Horace's Compromise* is an example of this effort to write enabling acts for practitioners. Horace, an imaginary English teacher in a suburban high school, teaches 120 students (not 175, as many teachers do in big city systems). Already overburdened with demands on his time, he moonlights in a liquor store. Horace knows that writing is crucial to learning, since writing and the command of language and thought it represents are good litmus tests for a sound secondary education. Horace strongly believes his English students should write twice a week, but he settles for once because he doesn't have time to read the papers.

Horace and his sad compromises are the place to begin any discussion about improving high schools. Unless Horace gets more tangible support—more pay, reduced teaching loads, a simpler schedule, big shifts in the way time and energy are spent—he is not going to be able to give students the attention he knows they need. Horace doesn't need fancy reports or national commissions to tell him what

could help the kids. He already knows, and that is part of the tragedy.

Two visions.

Beneath today's reform debates are some old polarities dividing that intricate set of compromises that is called the American comprehensive high school. From the early decades in this century on, the high school has represented an uneasy blend



of an academic and a social vision of secondary education. The academic vision holds that high schools exist to cultivate minds and equip students for higher education—not necessarily the same goals. The social vision has stressed a shifting, often amorphous agenda: the “Americanization” of immigrants, “life adjustment,” the special needs of adolescents, racial integration, integration of the handicapped—a wide array of communal and national purposes.

Both visions have strengths and weaknesses. The social vision has an idea of community at its core, however dubious or artificial. Historically, it tends to neglect intellectual values. The academic vision is more concerned with learning of students' minds. Historically, it tends to overlook its own class biases and elitism. The academic critics of the comprehensive high school have rarely understood the depth of aspiration underlying the high school's social vision of community.

These are the poles of an institution that was meant to be a compromise. Today the academic vision reigns, and the social vision is in retreat, not to say tatters.

Most reformers now believe that the balance in the '60s and '70s swung too far in the social direction, though they usually don't spell out what they mean. Reckoning with the '60s is an important unstated theme in today's reform dialogs. Many reformers have picked up a cautious version of the extreme right's notion that the schools were responsible for the unrest of the '60s. School-baiting is



contemporary form of the red-baiting of the '50s.

Politics aside, today's critics of the high school are accurate in pointing to a proliferation in the recent past of dubious electives and Mickey Mouse courses, like the one symbolized by that perhaps apocryphal '60s English textbook, *Munching Through Life*. They are also rightly critical of the lack of coherence in many students' programs. Students are not learning how to read carefully or to write. Reformers deplore declining test scores, though few want to take into account the new groups of students schools are dealing with since the victories for equality in the '60s.

There is one issue around which the old social and academic polarities break down, and the untidy world of adolescence refuses to be boxed in—personalization of knowledge. One reason high-school teachers need substantive autonomy is that learning has to be made personal to mean much to teenagers, or for that matter to most people. According to TheodoreSizer, in order to make learning personal, time, budgets and the curriculum have to be reworked so that teachers like Horace have direct responsibility for no more than 80 kids, rather than the 120 they now face.

Most high-school courses meet five times a week. And a teacher has five courses, with perhaps 30 students in each class, making a total of 150 students. In an elementary school, by contrast, a teacher sees 25 children a day. In that situation, knowledge is more likely to be made personal. In theory it's possible for the high school, or part of it—the ninth and 10th grades, perhaps—to work on this basis too.

An emphasis on coaching and dialog and more individualized teaching in smaller classes could reduce dropouts and offer a way to give basic skills to kids who still lack them. Subjects like English and history and social studies can be combined into good core courses. Teachers could have half the students they had before, in bigger blocks of time. Of course, one cost would be a loss of specialties and electives that now often protect creative teachers and let them teach what they live for. Still, if they could see the gains, they might be persuaded.

Building connections.

From an academic point of view, too many students are passive. From a social point of view, swollen cafeteria-and-shopping-mall high schools provide little time and space for the kind of encounters between students and teachers that build bonds and connections.

Schedules, budgets and teaching assignments must be reworked in order to offer more opportunities for talking,

coaching and dialog. The current reform movement overlooks one of the signal successes of American education in recent years—the rising achievement of elementary-school students, especially poor and black children, in the early years of school. One explanation is that federal programs like Title I gave money so more grownups could spend more purposeful time with the children. Why not do the same thing for the high schools?

Today's reforms are in full retreat from anything resembling a social vision of the high school. They say all is not right academically, and they are correct. Yet teenagers don't divide life up into compartments. They live one life, and the quality of community in a school is profoundly important. To borrow the words of one teacher, the intellectual and the human are not easy to separate. In fact, the ability to connect the two might be a good definition of an educated person.

In this round of technocratic reform, shadowed by the Gradgrinds, we need to remind ourselves that community is a value, and that many of our schools need to become learning communities. In such a community, one in which students and teachers care about learning and each other, the various items on Gradgrind's checklists—more homework, stiffer grades, longer hours—could lead to better results. Without the climate and the commitment, these superficial, external requirements may actually get in the way of education. The climate, the ethos of a school, is a joint creation of teachers and students that can't be engineered from outside.

More is not necessarily better in education. More English courses that test understanding of complex texts by true-false quizzes will not help students achieve a love and mastery of language. Unless re-

forms focus on the question of quality—always a product of that delicate triangle linking teacher, student and subject—we run the risk of erecting standards that mock the competence, commitment and intrinsic value that so many teachers and students hunger for.

What about poor kids?

The biggest weakness of the current crop of reform proposals is the lack of concern for poor kids. It was only in recent decades that high schools opened their doors to the diversity of American life. For the first time in world history, everybody's children go on to high school. This unprecedented experiment in mass education is surely the main reason for the much-discussed decline in test scores (though learned experts say otherwise).

Creating for the first time in history a democratic education for all students ought to be the challenge today. But despite the rhetoric insisting that the schools can be equal and excellent, there are signs of a shift away from the commitment to equality. Will there be new resources to help newcomers meet new standards? Or will the reforms end up raising the SAT scores by raising the dropout rates?

Between 25 and 30 percent of high-school students are dropping out—an increasingly sharp rise from the early '70s. And teenagers are suffering from the Reagan administration's reasonably successful effort to cure inflation by promoting mass unemployment. White teenagers face a 25 percent unemployment rate, while the minority rate is 50 percent. Among minority dropouts, the jobless rate is 65 percent.

These dropout and jobless rates are the most serious educational problems. Many teachers are dealing with students who have lost hope for the future. This

educational reality will not change until our society takes its commitment to full employment seriously. In the meantime, "excellent" schools will be those with the power to hold on to students.

High schools face declining enrollments, more budget cuts, seriously deteriorating physical plants, aging staffs and a loss of good teachers, especially many vital women who are now making other career choices. Schools are vulnerable because the old political coalitions supporting education are in disarray, and because the fundamental constituent base



Illustrations: Peter Hannan

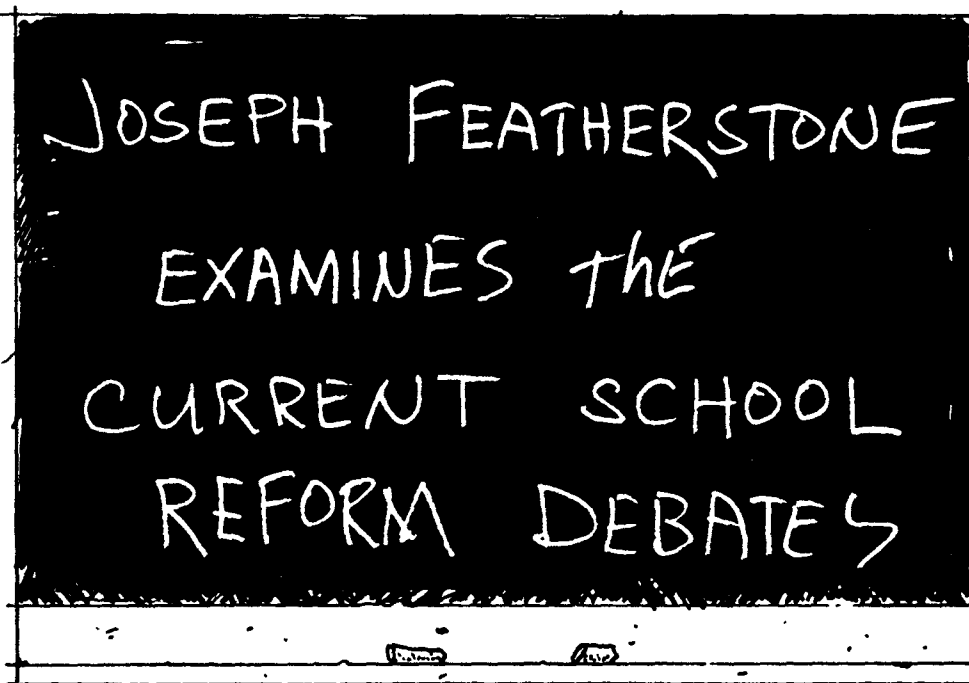
for education—the proportion of parents with children in school—has declined.

Parents and teachers feel more on the margins of American life than ever. Public education in most large urban areas is becoming the province of blacks, Hispanics and new immigrant groups—the poor. People are running scared, because of the deep long-term economic uncertainty and the growing sense that today's children may end up worse off than their parents. The leadership of the country is telling people they better look out for number one. And many schools are in real trouble.

Such straws in the wind make this feel like a moment of educational anxiety, not necessarily the time for generous-spirited reform, the renewal of schools as learning communities, or a revival of democracy. Many thoughtful teachers believe that the schools should change, but know that they are at risk in many places and fear that things could get worse. New energy for school reform might materialize if school improvement gets tied to wider efforts to make our society more democratic.

Amazingly, poll data suggest that the public would support more money for quality education. But basic principles need to guide reform. First, "quality" has to be for all or it's a fake. In a Boston high school recently, new standards permitted only 7 percent of the students to pass algebra. What next? Are the failing kids going to get more help? Or is the system raising the high-jump bar without

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MINDS

LETTERS

In These Times is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

DISMAYED

I WAS DISMAYED BY THE CYNICAL AND defeatist tone of John B. Judis' interview with himself on the presidential campaign (*ITT*, Sept. 5). It reflects an attitude that contributes to Ronald Reagan's chances for re-election and the left's powerlessness in American politics.

Judis seems to start from the proposition that Mondale will be defeated, and then buttresses this conclusion by citing some familiar themes: Reagan's lead in the polls, Mondale's lackluster performance as a campaigner and his failure to raise issues in a way that touches on Americans' most fundamental aspirations. This differs little from the "conventional wisdom" found in the mainstream press. However, Judis' faith in Mondale's doom appears to run much deeper than that of the mainstream pundits. By choosing the first female vice-presidential nominee, Judis believes that Mondale "conceded the election to Reagan" because of Ferraro's lack of ties to the West and South. By appealing to a sense of social justice and equality in his keynote address, Cuomo only "epitomizes...what Reagan called 'the politics of pessimism, fear and lim-its.'"

Certainly, the Democratic ticket's lack of appeal in the West and the South, and the failure of the Democrats to understand and respond to Reagan's ideological vision of America's "place in the sun," combined with Mondale's personal shortcomings, make it more likely than not that Reagan will be re-elected. But Mondale's defeat is not a foregone conclusion, and it is especially pernicious for the left to believe that it is.

The election is far more fluid than the conventional wisdom of either the right or the left would admit. That Mondale rose in the polls to equal Reagan just after the Democratic convention can be interpreted to indicate the softness of Reagan's support. While Reagan's personal appeal is undeniable, many Amer-

icans disagree with his policies and distrust his bellicose manner. The effect of increased minority registration and Ferraro's candidacy is yet unknown. Reagan's remarks linking politics and religion could strike a deep and uneasy chord among younger, independent voters who support Reagan's economics but not his social agenda.

—Matthew Jones
Brighton, Mass.

URGENCY

ITT'S ATTITUDE TOWARD THE UPCOMING presidential election remains unclear. First, are you optimistic about Mondale-Ferraro's chances? Your editorial (Aug. 8) says "we think they have a very good chance" of winning, but you do not explain why you think this. At the same time, in his interview with himself (*ITT*, Sept. 5), John Judis seems pessimistic. What exactly is your view, and why do you hold it? Do you agree with Judis—i.e., that Reagan will win because he "directly addresses Americans' most prevalent anxiety about their country" and Mondale does not? If not, how would you explain Reagan's notorious "Teflon coating"? In particular, how would you explain the remarkably lenient treatment Reagan has received from the mainstream press?

Second, *ITT* hasn't seemed too concerned to convey a sense of urgency about this election. Judis, for instance, observes that "the Republicans do not appear to be on the verge of a '30s-style realignment, only of another presidential win." Granting this, aren't the stakes nevertheless higher than usual this year? Wouldn't a Reagan victory be a very serious setback for the entire American left, such as it is?

—Jeff Miller
Portland, Ore.

Editor's note: (1) I think Mondale and Ferraro have a good chance of winning if they can get out the black vote, the

union vote and enough new women voters. So far, Mondale has done little to encourage the belief that he will do so, which may be John Judis' reason for pessimism. Yes, I agree with Judis' assessment of Reagan's popularity. (2) The stakes in this year's election are very high, but there is precious little that the left, as traditionally understood, can do about it. We assume and hope that independent socialists and others on the left will be active in the presidential campaign and various local campaigns, but we see *ITT*'s role less as that of cheerleading and more as that of analysis. A Mondale victory would be a boon to the left because it would change the terrain on which it operates. A Reagan victory would be a blow to the left, as to the American people, because it would increase the dangers of war in Central America, accelerate the attacks on labor and might change the judicial system for many years to come through appointments to the Supreme Court.

STIMULATED

A WORD OF ENCOURAGEMENT TO you and the staff of *ITT*. I find the paper invaluable. Besides resisting my taxes, I am involved in several issues and causes, ranging from co-ops to environmentalist coalitions to women's issues. I deeply appreciate the breadth and depth of the information I get from *ITT*. Diana Johnstone's European coverage and David Moberg's economic analyses are outstanding. Generally I read the paper from cover to cover, and while I don't always agree with the opinions I find in it, I am usually stimulated, and often cut out an article or two to save for my files. My own world would suffer if *In These Times* didn't exist.

—Elizabeth Gilman
St. Paul, Minn.

THE FORGOTTEN AGE

THOSE AGED ROUGHLY 40 TO 60 YEARS are the forgotten people—by insurance companies, recreation groups, in residential areas, employment opportunities and medical care.

Over the years, while I was being a mother, I worked part time to keep my head alive, and also attended college as a hobby while I was taking care of my home. At 50, armed with a lot of assorted experience and a shiny new AA, I went to work for a telephone company as an accounting clerk. Unfortunately my budding career began just as deregulation of the telephone industry was

looming on the horizon. People a few years older than me with many years of service were being encouraged to retire because the company had to revamp in order to remain competitive. Since in this high technology world, any new skill learned this year is likely to be obsolete in five years anyway, I still can't figure out what difference it makes whether you train someone in their 20s or their 50s. However, if all these people were being retired with all their expertise, it seemed pretty plain that I wasn't going to be trained for anything. I felt like an embarrassment to the company. After two years of watching young people being trained while I wasn't, I left.

After about six months a large insurance company advertised for 15 claims processors. They are expanding their offices in our town. Here was a chance to learn something new. The work was to be done on a CRT and I had used one at the phone company. My second interview was with a man who suggested that I consider very strongly before accepting a job because it is a very demanding, stressful job and they don't want to waste their training. He also stressed a demand of 95 percent accuracy. I thought his quest for 95 percent accuracy was admirable in view of the fact that my experience with insurance claims would indicate 50/50 a more likely figure. This man really gave me the impression that I should apologize for applying. This annoyed me so much that I decided "Okay mister, if I don't qualify, spell it out." The following week I received a call from a nice young lady explaining that they had received numerous applications from people with prior experience in the insurance industry.

I made three trips to that office: one to apply, one for the first interview and again for testing and a second interview. (I'm reasonably certain that I passed their tests since I missed qualifying for Mensa by one point.) From my observation, that insurance company found a remarkable number of young folks in their 20s with prior experience in the industry.

I do, however, have a little message for all executives in their 30s: stick around for 10 or 15 years.

—Edith Spade
Tyler, Texas

CORRECTION

THE HEADLINE ON JOHN JUDIS' ARTICLE, "All the current tax proposals will make the poor pay more," in last week's issue was misleading. Under Democratic proposals, those in the middle income range would pay more.

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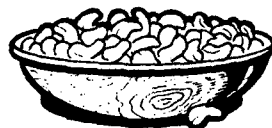
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By Leonard Rodberg &
William K. Tabb

WE WELCOME *IN These Times*' efforts to stimulate debate on the need for a new economic vision for this country. It is widely recognized that the mainstream Democratic Party candidates do not have attractive programs that address the economic ills of this country. The Republicans, following Reagan, have staked out the "let the market solve our problems" position and have done remarkably well with it—in part because of Reagan's skill as an ideologue, but in great measure because the Democrats have presented no real alternative. In our view the current restructuring of the economy will continue for some time and a more mature debate will eventually develop.

Several economists and policy analysts have suggested alternative economic pro-

government policy measures;

- the need to give equity considerations a central role in policy on efficiency grounds, arguing that the cost of ignoring workers' needs is socially wasteful of human capital, and that natural resistance on the part of antagonized workers slows down adaptation to change and inhibits the necessary participation of workers in the development of the forces of production.

Some proposals go significantly farther, calling into question the desirability of market-oriented decision-making and challenging the dominant place of capital. Nevertheless, most left programs that seek a wide audience eschew a direct endorsement of a socialist alternative. Instead, they use a more populist and nationalist rhetoric, leaving hazy what most needs to be made clear.

In our view, much left analysis also does not take sufficiently into account the new international and technological realities we face. The success of labor's offensive has not provoked a capitalist

lives of people.

When such plan are offered, there is typically little acknowledgement of the difficulty of democratically restructuring an economy in which numerous vested interests will seek to sabotage, openly and subtly, such a movement, and in which all of us are captives to possessive individualism, a deeply ingrained habit of personal thought and social discourse.

In our view, the central problem for

those who would think creatively about democratic economic institutions is to move beyond the logic of capital, an instrumental logic in which people are treated as factors of production. The efficiency orientation of so much of the debate obscures equity discussions to such an extent that the argument is made that workers, if involved in decision making, will be more productive in traditional efficiency terms, and the U.S. will therefore be better able to compete internationally.

But what if, as we believe the case to be in many industries, old-fashioned exploitative methods and low wages are the most "efficient" (in capital terms) form of organization of work? Further, what if some tasks are intrinsically uninteresting and humanizing them has very limited potential for improving worklife, so that higher pay to compensate for the "grub-biness" of the job is a more reasonable approach to equity?

Rather than viewing production decisions as being based upon questions of profitability and the productivity of labor, the logic used by capital, we believe that major production choices should be based on the use value of the products. It is not that we dislike markets and consumer choice; we think individual choice is important to assure satisfaction and fulfillment. The problems result from skewed income distribution and the difficulty of generating collective consumption goods via the market. The role of the public sector needs expanding to reflect a different process of choice. To accept the terms of the debate as one of declining productivity and the need to restore growth, rather than to ask who is served by such an economy, who is left out, who is discriminated against and what is produced, is to accept the fetishized, alienated terms of capitalist economic thinking.

Three issues to be faced.

There appear to be three perceptual or ideological problems to be dealt with in developing an alternative economic program:

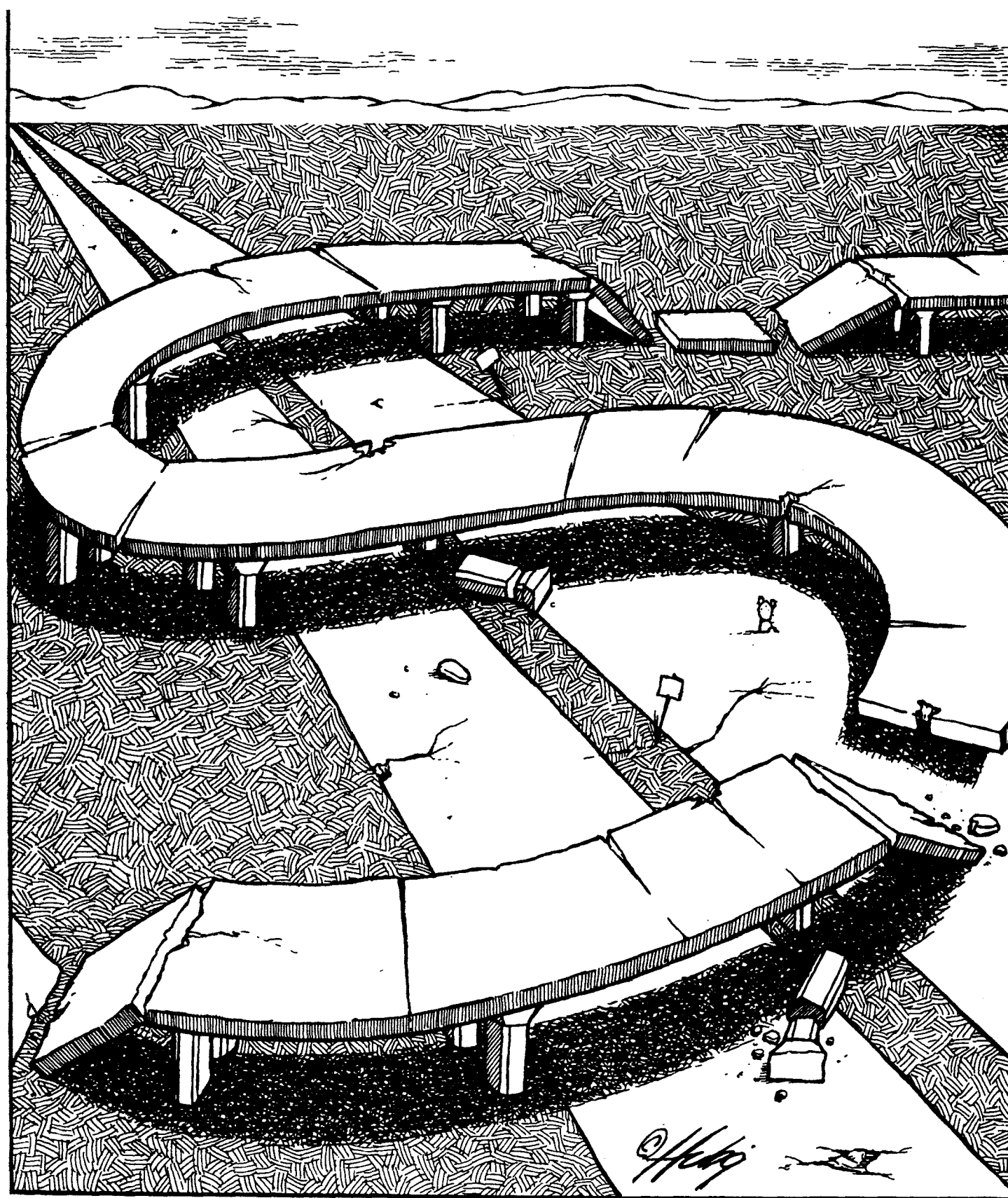
1. We must reject the definition of our problem as: "How can we beat the Japanese?" This widespread belief, that our economic ills stem from the failure of American industry, and American workers, to remain competitive in the world economy leads inevitably to the acceptance of a lower standard of living.

Our view is less condemnatory: we believe that the last quarter century has witnessed the development of industrial (manufacturing) capacity on a worldwide scale, with the older industrial nations as well as the new developing countries—many sponsored and even funded by the U.S. government and U.S. corporate dollars—gaining the capacity to produce basic industrial goods (e.g., steel) and finished products (auto, electronic equipment).

In short, we have witnessed the maturing of the world economy. Since manufacturing technology is available now on a worldwide basis, comparative advantage goes to countries whose industrial plant is newest and most efficient, and, even more important, whose workers are the lowest paid. If workers accept that they must compete against each other by accepting deeper and deeper wage cuts we will be back where we were before the establishment of the union movement.

The task is to raise standards, not to lower them. New forms of market constraints must be created that take into account that capital is mobile, while workers are not. Companies can choose to in-

Continued on the following page



grams. General outlines of a program, and some specific contents, have been proposed by Samuel Bowles, David Gordon and Thomas Weisskopf; by Harrison and Bluestone; by Martin Carnoy and Derek Shearer, by Richard Parker and by the editors of *In These Times*. In line with much socialist thought over the last century, these views embody a dual emphasis on meeting human needs and expanding democratic participation in the economy.

In different ways, they all incorporate similar major themes:

- the failure of an unregulated market and traditional macropolicies to deal with what is, in reality, international industrial restructuring;
- the importance of easing adjustment to competitive market forces through

counterattack. But the restructuring of production on a global scale, in response to new technological possibilities, has shifted power to capital and enabled it boldly to demand extensive concessions. Seeing causation simply in nationalistic terms obscures causes and leads to the presentation of programs in strictly national terms, with suggestions that seem like pie in the sky given the international pressures now being exerted on the American economy. This in turn can thus lead to a feeling of hopelessness, a view that nothing can be done locally and that individuals and communities are helpless. Partly for this reason, these plans have not succeeded in presenting a believable picture of how democratic planning could work and make a difference in the daily

Markets do help assure satisfaction, but production decisions should be made on the basis of use value, not profitability.

Continued from preceding page

vest their dollars—and to move their plants and equipment—to the country that offers them the most pliable work force and the greatest tax benefits. Workers cannot make such choices. They are in a very real sense the "country" to which or from which capital is moving.

Thus, the issue of "foreign competition" must be viewed both as a long-term, irreversible transformation of the world economy, and as a reflection of increased relative power of capital. We believe solutions must come from the political realm, as they generally have when economic relationships have dramatically shifted in ways deemed socially unacceptable. But before legislation is possible, the left must popularize two levels of alternatives. Local control movements will have to champion use values based on an inclusive concept of community and the application of social cost/benefit criteria to decision-making. And a new foreign policy must be supported, recognizing mutual interdependence and the equal value of human life everywhere, eschewing support of dictators—in the name of defeating communists—for the purpose of guarding "our" resources.

We believe that the goal, both for our economy and others, should be to achieve the maximum degree of local production of goods and services used locally. We should not seek full self-sufficiency, but a restructuring that would allow local workers to produce for their own needs. We suspect that most people, given con-

trol of their economies, would choose to produce primarily for local needs, not for export. Indeed, the export model of Third World development seems to require police state oppression.

Thus, we believe there must be a new basis for international trade, guided not by the theory of "comparative advantage" but by the principle of non-exploitative exchange relations. These would include, particularly, support for equitable wages and for decent working conditions (including workers health and safety). We would seek benefits that would flow to many through equal trade, not the extractive benefits that flow to a few through so-called "free trade."

2. We must move beyond the dominance of the marketplace. The "free market" is widely viewed today as holding the solution to our economic problems. It is not that the populace innately trusts the market—in their day-to-day lives as workers and consumers, they know better—but because this message is drummed into them continuously and incessantly by corporate-dominated media and by government officials, and because no alternative interpretation of the world has attained visibility.

Because of the greater flexibility and mobility of capital, the market—left to its own devices—will work to the detriment of most working people. The market can serve some valuable functions, especially in testing consumer preferences. But in deciding the location and character of production and in making goods available to consumers, especially

of different income levels, the market is weighted heavily against most working people. Its effect must increasingly be counterbalanced by government actions aimed at protecting the interests of the mass of working people. Indeed, this century has witnessed, by fits and starts, a gradual growth in the ability of government to provide this protection, and we believe that the new international developments call for more, not less, of such government involvement in the interests of working people.

3. We must move away from the view that government is incapable of solving our economic problems and, indeed, is the principal cause of many of them. In this country government programs of a remedial nature have been too short-lived, too under-funded, and too meager to have a significant impact on the lives of most Americans. This is not because of any innate inadequacy of something called "government," but rather because the possibilities open to state intervention are constrained by corporate power and influence.

The problems of our economy are structural—in part the "normal" workings of the market system, in part a deeper crisis brought on by the global redeployment of capital and labor. We hold government to blame, not for causing them, but for failing to see the need to guide or even understand these changes. But this is again not the failure of some abstract "government," but of the particular government we have.

An alternative economic program

must show the real potential of government for improving the lives of ordinary people, while speaking realistically to the new international and technological constraints on economic policy.

In the past, new technologies (e.g., steelmaking, railroad construction and petrochemicals in the late 19th century, automobiles and household consumer products in the '30s-'60s) created new industries and allowed the world economy to emerge from depression. It is not yet clear what new developments (if any) will generate the next upswing. But they will take place in the context of concurrent revolutions in microelectronics and bio-engineering.

Unlike previous "extensive" technologies, which generated upswings and created new job opportunities, these are "intensive" technologies that lower production costs in existing industries and will destroy jobs. The elites who can take advantage of this technology will benefit from this upswing, not the mass of the blue- and white-collar workers whose labor will be devalued.

In previous long-wave upswings, there was a restructuring of the economy (development of giant corporations in the late 19th century, New Deal government agencies and programs in the '30s-'60s). Some restructuring will take place in this one. The issue that the left must confront is: how can restructuring be addressed so that it will include the mass of the population and be designed to benefit them, and not only those upper-income persons who own and manage the high-technology, front-line firms.

An alternate economic program must be able to guide the next long-wave restructuring toward a broadly humane society. Much hard work is needed to create such a program, but its general outlines are clear:

- It must incorporate democratic planning, based upon principles of "community federalism," in which local participation and control is balanced by national regulatory and standard-setting mechanisms, to insure that working peoples' needs are met. (The importance of this explicit democratic decision process was pointed up recently by the overwhelming defeat of an industrial policy proposal in Rhode Island that was viewed as subject to elite control.)

- It must contain concrete mechanisms to ensure locally- and regionally-accessible sources of financial and technical support for workers seeking employment and for enterprises wishing to provide needed goods, services and local employment, under either private or public auspices.

- It must ensure that public enterprises will be created where private enterprise is unable or unwilling to provide the goods, services and employment required by regions and communities.

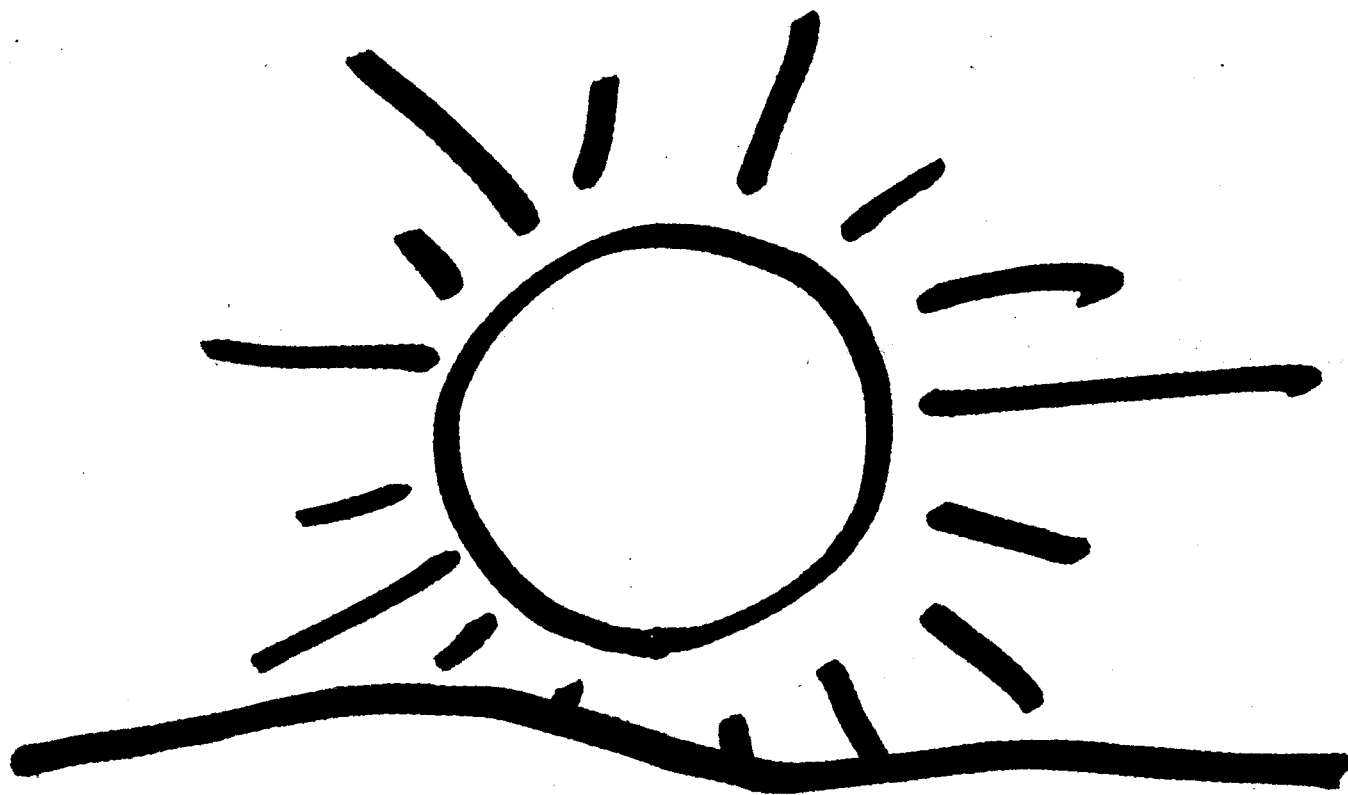
- It must contain explicit provisions to pay for new, publicly-beneficial measures, control inflation and retain capital within the country to be used to meet the needs of American workers.

- Internationally, this program should provide for cooperation in production and trade with other states seeking to better the lives of their working people.

This is a tall order. Forecasting technological, economic and political developments is especially hard in a time of rapid change. "Designing" a new economy is not easy, nor can it be undertaken without continual feedback from various constituencies. No one could really think all this out ahead of time. But the attempt must be made to begin the political education needed to develop a counter to the contemporary hegemony of capital.

We are talking about a challenge to the economic and political power of the strongest groupings in the country. It will be necessary to show that the standard of living of the average American would be improved by such a program and to begin mobilizing a national movement in its support. A vigorous movement of working people, feminists, environmentalists and many others will be essential to its success.

Leonard Rodberg teaches urban studies at Queens College. William Tabb teaches economics at the same school.



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HSS4

By John Yates

L O N D O N

ON AUGUST 2, KEN LIVINGSTONE stepped down as leader of the Greater London Council (GLC). Along with three other Labour councillors he resigned his seat in London's Paddington ward to fight a by-election on the government's proposals to abolish the GLC—London's democratically elected, city-wide government.

According to Livingstone, Labour has already won all the technical and factual arguments for retaining the GLC as the city's governing body. "The only argument the government now falls back on is that they have a mandate to abolish the GLC," Livingstone says.

That claim stems from the 1983 general election when the Tories' manifesto proclaimed, "The Metropolitan Counties and the Greater London Council have been shown to be a wasteful and unnecessary tier of government. We shall abolish them...."

Livingstone ridicules the mandate claim. "I don't believe that people voted in the last general election on the issue of the GLC. They voted on the economy, defense and what they thought about the party leaders," he says.

The by-elections, to be held September 20, will give Londoners a chance to say what they think of the Tory proposals. Livingstone predicts Labour victories will destroy the government's claim to a mandate.

A wider plan.

But the Tories' plan to abolish the GLC is more than just a manifesto commitment. It is part of a much wider strategy designed to centralize political control over local government expenditure. Also in line for abolition are the six Metropolitan counties created by the Conservatives under Ted Heath in 1972. Among these metropolitan counties are Merseyside, West Midlands, West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester, all won from the Tories in the last local elections in 1981, and at the heart of Labour's electoral support.

Along with abolition, the Thatcher administration has rushed through new legislation—the Rates Act of 1984—giving the Secretary of State for the Environment, Patrick Jenkin, the power to impose ceilings on local authority expenditure. This measure, known as "rate-capping," effectively puts an end to several centuries of freedom for local councils to determine their own expenditure and tax levels—a right won in 1601.

John Cunningham, Labour's shadow Environment spokesman, described the Rates Bill in its second reading as "a giant stride—the most serious and sinister yet—along the pathway to central control of all aspects of life in this country." Already Patrick Jenkin has named a hit list of 18 authorities due to be rate-capped in 1985. Sixteen of them are Labour controlled.

This Tory policy has forced many Labour authorities to implement drastic cuts in education and social services. But others, such as Liverpool, Sheffield and London, have refused to be intimidated. Many have successfully mobilized public support behind their campaigns to maintain services.

By focusing on the issues of "democracy" and "local choice," Labour councils have begun to win a reversal of public attitudes toward local government. In London an opinion poll commissioned by the GLC showed that two-thirds of Londoners were in favor of keeping the GLC. More recently in Sheffield the same polling agency found more than 55 percent opposed to rate capping.

For many on the left the fight against Thatcher has been coordinated not by the parliamentary Labour Party, hopelessly enfeebled by Thatcher's huge majority, but by local Labour authorities up and down the country. Ken Livingstone and the GLC are often at the leading edge of that resistance.

One of a new generation of Labour politicians, Livingstone came to power in

1981 when the Labour Party was undergoing a constitutional crisis. He identified with the Campaign for Labour Party Democracy to establish mandatory re-election for Members of Parliament (MPs) and a new electoral college for electing the leader.

In London he worked hard to ensure that if Labour won the GLC in 1981 a majority of its members would be on the party's left. Labour won 50 seats in the 1981 elections. Livingstone won the key marginal seat of Paddington. But he was not yet the leader of the GLC. The Labour Party had gone into the elections under the center right leadership of Andrew McIntosh. The day after the polls the victorious Labour group was due to meet at County Hall to elect its leader. McIntosh, unaware of behind-the-scenes moves to oust him, thought it would be a formality. In his pocket he had a letter of congratulations from Michael Foot. McIntosh gave a press conference: "I am going to win. The results of the election show that the people of London wanted Labour to win, but they also show they wanted a Labour Party of responsible and sensible people."

But Livingstone preempted the election meeting. He called together a group of the new left and center councillors: "We needed two hours for all the new incoming left people to sit down and argue what we were going to do." At the leadership elections the left swept the board.

Livingstone quickly showed himself to be a political maverick. He used the GLC as a platform to publicize radical left issues, including a call for a dialog with Sinn Fein, the political wing of the IRA, which earned him the sobriquet "the most odious man in Britain" from the *Sun* newspaper. Livingstone's love-hate relationship with the media caused many within the London Labour group to question his suitability for leadership. The press was presenting him as the real face of the Labour Party. His comments on Ireland undoubtedly cost Labour votes. But Livingstone wants to change society, and he believes that means raising the temperature of the debate and changing attitudes. As one commentator put it: "Livingstone may have the style of a populist, but he is at heart a radical evangelist who believes he can convert people to his way of thinking."

But raising the temperature of the debate offended many within the Labour group. Livingstone's high profile was obscuring a number of the party's major policies. It also offended the new group's emphasis on collectivity. By autumn 1981, Livingstone's leadership looked decidedly shaky.

The media attack on Livingstone was not the new administration's only worry. Another came in the shape of Michael Heseltine, then Secretary of State for the Environment.

The Conservative government had promised in its 1979 manifesto that "any future government which sets out honestly to reduce inflation and taxation will have to make substantial economies, and there should be no doubt of our intention to do so." As the Tories had promised to protect the National Health Service and the Social Security System, the bulk of the economies fell on housing, education and the social services, which were largely provided by local government.

When the Tories first came to power in 1979, local authorities planned to spend about 14 billion pounds—nearly a quarter of all United Kingdom public spending. The government funded 61 percent of this through grants. The remaining 39 percent was financed through locally levied "rates," a form of tax on domestic and business property ownership.

Constitutionally, the central government can reduce the amount of grants it pays to local authorities. Thus, if councils wish to maintain or expand their services the additional money has to come through raising the local rates—never a popular measure.

Two things prevented Heseltine from doing this. First, it would have been easy for Labour councils to blame the Tories for the increase in the rates. This would have seriously embarrassed Margaret Thatcher, who in 1974 and 1979 had pro-

mised to do away with the rates altogether. But second, cabinet ministers, notably Mark Carlisle at Education, felt that a generalized cut in expenditure would seriously weaken a number of local authorities to the point where they could no longer offer adequate service to their constituents.

So Heseltine devised a scheme to punish the "high spending" authorities, all of whom just happened to be Labour controlled. The Local Government Land and Planning Act 1980 was the first in a series of measures designed to tighten central control over local government expenditure. As John Carvel, local government editor for the *Guardian* said at the time, "It marks a radical shift by central government from concern with total levels of local spending toward detailed intervention in the affairs of local government." During the next four years the Act went through several toughening stages, culminating in this year's Rates Act.

Heseltine's proposals threatened almost every plank of the GLC's manifesto program. Most important, it jeopardized Labour's commitment to reduce fares on London Transport buses and Tubes by 25 percent and freeze them at that level.

Livingstone's response was unequivocal. "There is no way in which Labour can balance the books under the proposed system without either making impossible cuts or huge domestic rate increases. Labour councils must refuse to vote for cuts in services or rent and fare increases. But they must also refuse to vote for a rate increase under the Tories' new system."

Livingstone, writing in the *Labour Herald*, advocated an illegal budget. Such a measure opened councillors to the threat of surcharge and immediate disqualification from office. Few believed Livingstone could get support for such drastic action. But Livingstone's Fares Fair policy, as it became known, was under attack from another direction. Conservatives from the London Borough of Bromley had brought an action against the GLC's subsidized transport scheme in the Divisional Courts. Though they lost this action, they were advised that they would win an appeal. In November 1981, Lord Denning, the Master of the Rolls, and Lord Chief Justice Oliver declared the GLC's Fares Fair policy illegal.

According to Oliver, Section 7(3) of the Transport London Act 1969 committed the GLC to balance its books "as far as is practicable." The Fares Fair policy clearly breached this rule.

For a moment the Labour group fused together in a united condemnation of the Lords' decision. The Transport chairman, Dave Wetzel, called the Law Lords "Vandals in Ermine." They had, he said, done more damage to public and private transport than any vandal does when he smashes a light on a bus or snaps an aerial on a car. The Labour unity was short lived. On the right, councillors who feared personal surcharge urged Livingstone to jettison the transport policy, even if it meant a 200 percent increase in fares. On the left another argument was advanced. As the Labour group had been forced to implement Tory policies surely it would be better to resign *en masse* and go into majority opposition, leaving the Tory group to do their own dirty work.

Livingstone himself had advocated such a policy in fighting Heseltine. But now he changed tactics. He argued the Labour group should refuse to put up the fares, thus breaking the law and forcing the government to intervene.

He knew the policy could not succeed in the long term. The GLC's rate demand would have been declared illegal and the council would have quickly become bankrupt. GLC officers informed the leadership that doubling the fares, on the understanding that further increases of 50 percent to 100 percent would be needed later, would bring the GLC back into legality.

Livingstone allowed the group an open vote, but recommended councillors to vote against the proposed increases. At a packed council meeting the Tories went on the attack, hoping to show how bitterly divided the Labour ranks were. The Tories proposed an increase of 60 percent. They were then warned that such an increase would not bring the GLC back into legality, and that Tory members would face a surcharge of 125 million pounds. Eventually the Tories were forced to join with the Labour right in supporting 100 percent fares increases.

Tory disarray hid the extent of Livingstone's defeat. He was able to blame the Tories and Labour's right wing for destroying party policy, while keeping his left credentials intact. Under pressure he moved toward a compromise with political reality.

To the left, Livingstone had sold out. Livingstone disagrees: "Being defeated is not a betrayal. Carrying on fighting and using the County Hall to carry on that fight is what the Labour movement expects its representatives to do. What they can't ever forgive is when they give up without a fight."

PERSPECTIVES

The fight to save the London Council

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Chants Democratic. New York City and the Rise of the American Working Class, 1788-1850

Oxford University Press, 448 pp., \$35

By Steven Rosswurm

At least two major flaws have marred most histories of American working peoples. One has been the tendency to examine labor history through the lens of "American exceptionalism," which assumes that "normal" working-class history occurred elsewhere, probably in Europe, perhaps in Russia or China. Sombart's hoary question—"Why is there no socialism in America?"—often has framed this thesis.

The second obstacle—the construct of false consciousness—has been just as influential as exceptionalism. Advocates of the theory of false consciousness have assumed that at any given point in the development of the working class, there was an abstract set of demands and ideas—and even organizational forms—that working people should have espoused. Closely allied to both the theory of false consciousness and the stance of American exceptionalism has been a tendency toward viewing the electoral arena as inherently corrupting, republican institutions as a "bourgeois sham" and the real locus of class struggle as the workplace or, more recently, the community.

Because many labor historians, both inside and outside the academy, have adopted these positions, much of U.S. labor history has been irrelevant to building a mass socialist movement. The effort to write a "useable" past—one that subordinates everything to providing answers for contemporary political problems—has produced histories that have both obscured American labor history and impeded socialist organizing.

Ambitious goals.

Sean Wilentz' *Chants Democratic* joins Nick Salvatore's biography of Eugene Debs and Leon Fink's study of the Knights of Labor as one of the most fully realized recent works of American labor history.

Wilentz' goal is ambitious—to chart the formation of the New York City working class from 1788 to 1850. During that period, New York City became America's premier commercial and financial center and then its leading manufacturer. In 1825, its population stood at about 166,000; by 1850, partly because of heavy Irish and German immigration, it had grown to more than 500,000.

The key to Wilentz' success in tracing the formation of New York City's working class is his focus on the structure and ideology of what he calls the "artisan system of labor." He describes and analyzes that system as it existed and changed from 1788 to 1825, and then discusses "artisan republicanism"—an ideology that shared much with American republicanism, but was particular to skilled artisans, craftsmen and journeymen in content and vision. It was with this ideology—simultaneously individualist and collective—that New York artisans faced industrialization after 1825.

New York's rise to manufacturing prominence, which Wilentz calls "metropolitan industrialization," was an uneven so-

cial process and had little in common with the equation of industrialization with factories. Some trades, most notably the consumer finishing ones of clothing, shoe and furniture making, became "sweated" and "matrix[es] of unremitting exploitation," while others, such as shipbuilding and food preparation, retained their traditional work processes and patterns of distribution. Still another, printing, saw significant technological innovation that led to the kind of division of labor and skill dilution normally associated with a later period.

Two responses emerged out of the post-1825 confrontation between "artisan republicanism" and "metropolitan industrialization." One defended what Wilentz calls "capitalist entrepreneurship"; the other advocated "radical critiques of the emerging order." In a series of false starts and contradictory steps, New York working men—and they were men, as the developing labor movement excluded women—developed a critique of capitalism that equaled, in its "fusion of anticapitalist 'producerism' and the analysis of workshop exploitation," any created by the European working class in the 1830s.

In this same confrontation, New York wage-earners forged institutions to defend their interests against large masters and

manufacturers. First came the Working Men's Party in 1829, which was a tenuous and short-lived coalition of free thinkers, radical journeymen and discontented manufacturers, artisans and small merchants. The Working Men's Party made an auspicious debut in the city council elections of 1829, only to be taken over first by the Owenites and disgruntled employers and shopkeepers; and then, finally and completely by the latter group,

creasing employer and state opposition. Yet it was not "official repression nor political co-optation" that destroyed the union movement, but rather an economic downturn. When the Panic of 1837 hit, nearly one-half of the city's craft workers lost their jobs.

Union activity ceased almost entirely during the depression that followed from the Panic. Through 1850, divisions within the working class that had been

Much U.S. labor history has been irrelevant to building socialism. This book isn't.

who advocated an anti-monopolistic entrepreneurialism in tune with triumphant Jacksonianism.

The General Trades Union (GTU) of the City of New York was formed in 1833. The GTU, probably "the most democratic major institution founded in the United States in the 1830s," comprised more than 40 unions by 1837. It assisted in a series of conflicts that centered not just on wages but also on the "character of the wage relation." It excluded all employers, no matter how sympathetic to the labor movement. The GTU and its affiliated unions conducted 10 major strikes in 1836, and met with in-

apparent in the 1830s emerged and temporarily solidified. White, male, native-born New Yorkers lashed out against the foreign-born as the nativist American Republican Party swept into city government in 1844. Journeymen—skilled wage earners—moved closer to the previously master- and middle-class-dominated evangelical and temperance movements. At another level, masters and manufacturers saw the merging of their political economy—which included the proposition that capital and labor were allies—with their moralism in a combination that looked to "the fullest

expression of an American bourgeois ideal."

As Wilentz demonstrates, the 1840s weren't only a time of moving backward for the working class, it was also moving forward; along with the worst working-class "ethnic bigotry" came steps beyond that dead end, and that of middle-class evangelicalism. If some of the working class' "defensive strategies for dignified survival" were ugly, others were continually educating working people about their position in capitalism.

Wilentz' sophisticated analysis of the quiet years in the 1840s—which are some of the most significant and astute parts of the book—provides an understanding of the outburst of class conflict that followed in 1850, when the working class and reformers established the New York Industrial Congress (IC). Union men debated the issues of socialism and cooperationism; the IC moved its deliberations into City Hall, and the tailors, both English and German, took on their employers in the "bloodiest and most divisive strike" of "antebellum urban America."

Bloody repression, Democratic co-optation and internal splits ended the "labor crisis of 1850." But again, Wilentz warns not to see these events as just a defeat, for the working class had established itself and its presence in the city. The ongoing process of class formation after 1788 had produced both; neither was about to go away.

Questions.

Wilentz' work raises questions about working-class ideology and republicanism that are central to building a socialist movement in this country. What does it mean that artisans who became manufacturers and merchants led New York's "metropolitan industrialization" which was—in Marx' words—"the really revolutionary path"? Might not "entrepreneurialism" have been a vital part of "artisan republicanism" long before its full fleshing-out in the 1840s? One might argue, and Wilentz presents evidence that republican ideology was so elastic, so contradictory, so amorphous, that it quickly became a barrier to the development of working-class ideology. Even at its most class-conscious level of articulation, might not working-class republicanism have established one of the bases for co-optation by those Democrats most sensitive to working peoples' concerns? Was republican ideology a trap rather than a source of strength?

These questions lie at the heart of *Chants Democratic*, which is, in Wilentz' words, an "extended historical essay on capitalism and democracy." Socialism in America must be built upon American traditions and the existing culture and ideology of the working class. The critical question is: what are the strengths and weaknesses of those "existing resources"? Without a theoretical framework devoid of the thesis of exceptionalism and the theory of false consciousness, Wilentz could not have written a book that takes us so far into these questions. Without a commitment to a non-"useable" past, he could not have created a useable one. *Chants Democratic* deserves sustained and serious political discussion.

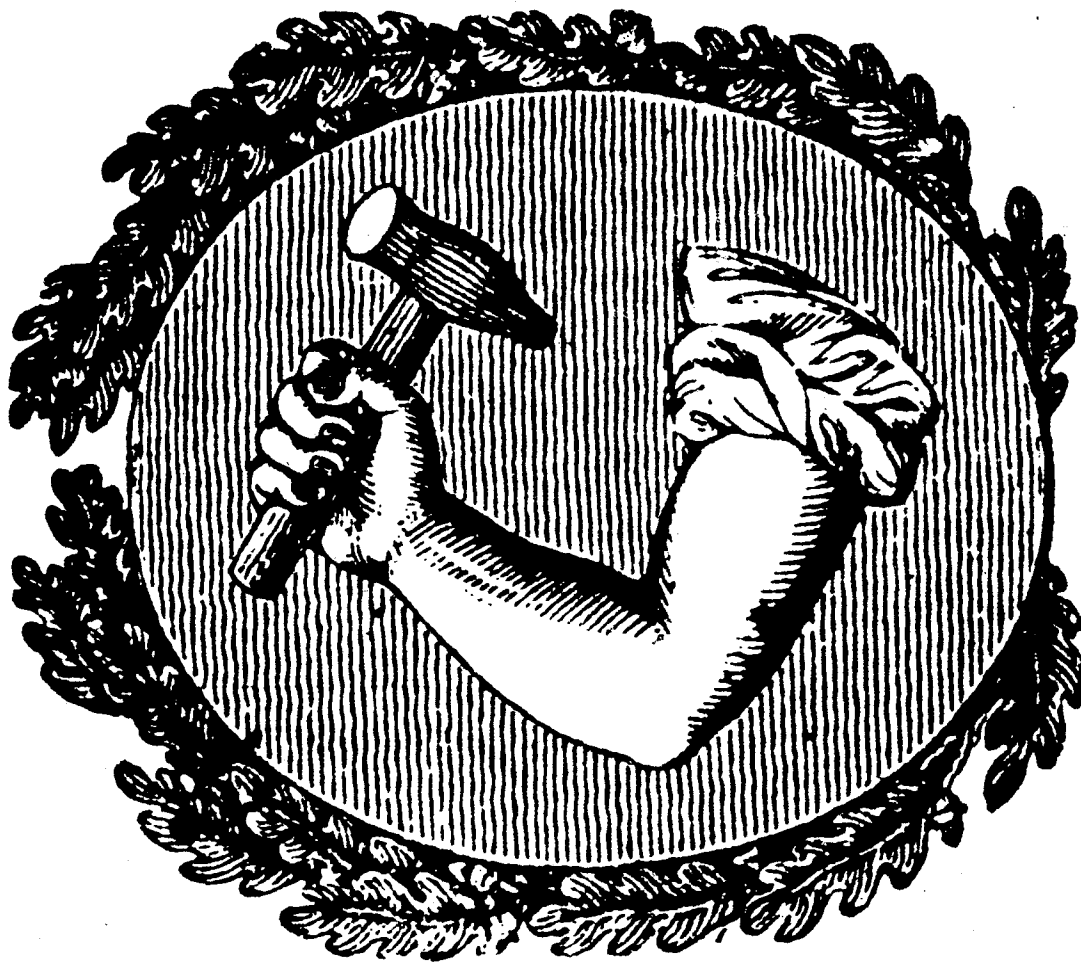
Steven Rosswurm teaches history at Lake Forest College and is working on a book on Philadelphia during the American Revolution.

INPRINT

LABOR HISTORY

The making of the American working class

The hammer and hand was the symbol for the General Trades Union of artisans in 1836.



A Voice from the People!

Great Meeting in the Park!!



One critical difference between the United States and other ex-slave societies was that Southern freedmen possessed legal and civil rights—including the vote.

**Nothing But Freedom:
Emancipation and Its Legacy**
By Eric Foner
Louisiana State University,
142 pp., \$5.95

By Judith Stein

Eric Foner has been at the forefront of radical or neo-Marxist history, incorporating black, women's, working-class and social history of the past two decades without becoming a captive or true believer. No priest of novelty, Foner writes perceptively about elites and popular classes. His books on the Revolutionary era (*Tom Paine and Revolutionary America*) and the anti-slavery period (*Free Soil, Free Labor, Free Man*) have clarified many ideas about 19th-century America. Using comparative perspectives from other societies, his work has helped to combat the provincialism that once dominated much of the writing of American history.

Nothing But Freedom displays many of the strengths of Foner's history and offers a tantalizing preview of his forthcoming study of post-Civil War Reconstruction.

Originating in the Fleming lectures at Louisiana State University, the book's three essays discard many of the traditional questions of Reconstruction history—was it a period of good government or corrupt rule, was it motivated by idealism or economic interest? Foner takes a dim view of current ahistorical judgments that minimize Reconstruction's radicalism by measuring its achievements in race relations by those of the civil rights movement of the '60s, and by stressing the failure of land confiscation or "40 acres and a

mule." Instead, Foner examines what he believes were the essential social processes of the period. He argues that Reconstruction was an American variant of the class struggles erupting in post-emancipation societies everywhere. They were part of complex pressures that ended various forms of unfree agricultural labor, serfdom as well as slavery, in the 19th century.

Free labor.

If the old bondages ended, the principal actors did not agree upon replacements. In the main, the owners of land wished to approximate the old plantation system based upon compulsion. Political elites in Britain and the northern U.S. preferred large-scale units worked by voluntary wage-earners—"free labor." The blacks wanted their own land, economic independence.

The disputes over the use of the land and the status of the laborer were long and protracted. In the end, unalloyed victory eluded the planters, freedmen and advocates of capitalist agriculture. Foner shows that the subsequent agricultural arrange-

ments were dependent upon land/labor ratios and the social system in which the conflicts of the freedmen and planters took place.

In Haiti, one end of the spectrum, where the planter class was destroyed through slaughter and emigration, the former slaves successfully resisted the reimposition of the plantation, which Toussant L'Ouverture himself advocated as a means of creating a nation. But as Foner ironically observes, the peasants' victory was no guarantee of individual or Haitian prosperity.

At the other pole, where the planters remained and unused land was not available, in Barbados, for instance, the landowners were able to restore plantations and retain control over labor. In Jamaica, Trinidad and British Guiana, falling somewhere in the middle, plantations had not occupied all the land and former slaves became peasants, owning land and coexisting with the planters, who now employed immigrant, indentured laborers.

Although Foner understands the various forces and actors affecting the political economy of

Foner argues that post-emancipation politics were defined not by race relations but mostly by the "labor problem."

post-emancipation societies, the book centers upon the struggles of planters and laborers. The ex-slaves of the Caribbean had contended with the planters outside of polity. The critical difference between the U.S. and other ex-slave societies was that Southern freedmen possessed legal and civil rights, including the ballot. In his second essay, Foner describes how they used politics in a region where the planters both survived and retained their land.

Initially, the freedmen possessed only their labor power, which although considerable was not decisive in the first years after the Civil War. The planters used their control of state and local government to keep the blacks on the plantation by legislating the infamous Black Codes, common in all post-slavery societies, and even more stringent in other places. Many of these laws were blunted by the Freedmen's Bureau of Civil Rights Act of 1866. They were repealed after Congress took control of national policy and enfranchised blacks.

With the ballot, the freedmen resumed their battles with the planters, aided now by sheriffs and judges dependent upon black votes and by laws written by their representatives. The black politics of Reconstruction was not a politics of role models, inspiration or ethnicity. The sheriff who supervised the division of crops, a judge who refused to order the militia to break a strike and a legislator who wrote a tax or vagrancy law, a hunting or fencing measure were altering class relationships. In his last essay, Foner demonstrates how crucial political power was when he describes the successful strikes of South Carolina rice workers, sheltered by Republican officials, and the failures of their brothers across the state line in Georgia, who lacked political representation.

Political power.

That the planter class regained the political initiative after 1877 and finally ended black politics at the disfranchising conventions around 1900 demonstrates the limits of black political power, not its significance or positive effect for most blacks. By the beginning of the 20th century,

Southern planters, like their Caribbean counterparts, had triumphed over their sharecroppers and small farmers because they monopolized politics, a necessary if insufficient precondition for the economic survival of the plantation. Criticizing neo-classical economic theory, Foner argues that political power, not market superiority determined the outcome.

Foner's discussion of black politics raises other issues. He shows how the former slaves quickly assimilated the values of American republicanism by demanding their rights as citizens, unlike the freedmen of the Caribbean societies who aspired to be left alone. Republicanism translated the freedmen's desire for autonomy and land into the idea of ownership of productive property as the guarantor of independent citizenship. Thus, black thought, although rooted in the particular experience of slavery merged with the political ideas of the small propertied classes of the 19th century and conflicted with newer capitalist ideas of property and labor.

He also raises the question of the South's other small farmers—the whites. Although he does not address the question directly in his book, he hints at some of the reasons why these whites' response to Reconstruction was more ambiguous than that of the blacks. Reconstruction tax policies placed new burdens on land ownership, as the state spent more on schools and other social services, as well as railroads and other economic investments. Many white yeomen, first-time taxpayers, may have felt burdened by Reconstruction governments, especially as cotton prices plummeted. At a minimum, their social experiences and histories differed from those of the blacks. The Civil War and Reconstruction brought freedom to the slaves. To the once self-sufficient whites it brought cotton capitalism that propelled them on the road to tenancy.

Foner argues that the old *deus ex machina*—racism—is not a sufficient explanation for the failures of a durable biracial republicanism, just as racism cannot explain planter behavior in Reconstruction. Foner makes it clear that he is not writing about race relations or racial attitudes in these essays. His conclusion—that much of post-emancipation politics was defined by the "labor problem"—implies that racial attitudes were less significant determinants of Reconstruction than other historians have made them.

Nothing But Freedom is dedicated to W.E.B. DuBois, whose *Black Reconstruction* was the first attempt to fight the racism of the *Birth of a Nation* school of thought. Foner has more data and a more refined theoretical apparatus than DuBois did. He is not burdened by the defensive posture DuBois had to assume when his book appeared in 1934. And, although Foner is clearly sympathetic to the ex-slaves, he is also not hindered by DuBois' romantic view of race and racial destiny. If these differences make Foner's book less poetic than DuBois', it also keeps it more accurate and analytic. *Nothing But Freedom* provides a deeper understanding of the meanings of freedom and the changing significance of politics today, as well as in the 19th century.

Judith Stein teaches history at the City College of New York and is the author of a forthcoming book on Marcus Garvey.

WOMEN'S HISTORY

Go West young woman



The Land Before Her: Fantasy and Experience of the American Frontier 1630-1860

By Annette Kolodny
University of North Carolina Press, 281 pp., \$9.95 paper

By Ann Douglas

Genuine, up-to-date and significant feminist history is hard to come by today. *The Land Before Her* offers its readers a new chapter of such history. In her first book, *The Lay of the Land*, Annette Kolodny described the American male's contradictory and powerful fantasies about the "virgin land" he settled and ravaged. American male pioneers saw themselves in an "erotic" relationship to the continent; the land was both a mother waiting to nurture them and a virgin inviting conquest.

The link between the two roles the land proffered men—sons needing protection and males requiring sexual outlet—was simple: whether as sons or lovers, there were many men and only one continent no matter how ample. In both fantasies, men relate to each other as siblings, competitors for space and favor. Men's desire to outdo one another, themselves and the land itself, abetted by economic developments and government policies, resulted in the over-rapid exploitative rampage Teddy Roosevelt euphemistically called "The Winning of the West."

But, as Kolodny's second book, *The Land Before Her*, reminds us, most of these men, including Daniel Boone himself, had female companions—mothers, daughters and, most important, wives. This book is an interesting and suggestive study of what impelled women West.

The most important motive was sheer necessity. From Puritan days to the Civil War, women followed men to this "vast and desolate wilderness" because they had no choice. As an unhappy Western settler told

Margaret Fuller in the early 1840s, she had come to "so barren a spot" and remained 40 years, because "it was the man's notion." Appropriately Kolodny begins with captivity narratives of 17th and 18th-century women: stories of women kidnapped by Indians, often with their children, forced to move with the tribe across difficult terrain, and rescued, or escaped, to tell the tale.

While Mary Rowlandson and Hannah Swarton describe themselves as helpless victims, Hannah Dustin and the Lady in the Cave of the "Panther Captivity" narrative handily killed (and dismembered) their captors. Dustin managed to bring the scalps of her oppressors home to collect bounty. The Lady in the Cave survived alone in the wilderness for nine years; according to legend, she sustained herself and a pet dog, all the while retaining the general manners appropriate to middle-class maidenhood in the late 18th century.

The women in the captivity narratives raised the issue of miscegenation more dramatically than their male peers; a number of them married into the Indian clan that captured them and refused "rescue." Woman might have been hostages in men's march of empire, but they used skills and upheld values that contradicted that role.

Women who traveled West later did not have to scalp Indians or submit; they transported an evolved set of domestic middle-class values to a Western setting. Kolodny has studied letters, diaries, promotional literature and domestic fiction to understand the experience and dreams of women who shared in the Western expansion from the late 18th century to the Civil War. One theme is dominant: American women moved West in hopes of building, in Caroline Kirkland's phrase, "a new home," both traditional and innovative.

Women fantasized about building new homes in the West.

Unlike men, women who moved West discounted visions of an Eden requiring no labor. Kolodny argues that the frontier stressed the value of female household skills that were fast becoming obsolete for middle-class women in the urbanizing Northeast. The West presented women with the chance to practice their arts and to extend them from the home to the forest or plains. (They created "gardens," a favored image in this literature.) The society of extended families that women envisioned in the West broke down painful class divisions endemic in the industrial system of the North, and institutionalized between masters and slaves in the plantation economy of the South. The middle-class literate women who comprise Kolodny's subject were not maidens but mothers and wives who claimed the authority society granted motherhood.

Yet, Kolodny shows, women's fantasies of the West were unfulfilled and their works, as a few of them realized, were not to change the course of Western expansion. The best of these

Unlike men, women who moved West discounted visions of an Eden requiring no labor.

writings were either ignored, like Fuller's *Summer on the Lakes*, or partially retracted, like Caroline Kirkland's *A New Home: Who'll Follow?* Alice Cary, Ohio-born author of *Clovernook*, understood that the industrial order, with its regime of unending "work," "poverty" for the many and blighting ugliness for all, was fast moving West. The new Western "suburbs" were not a refuge but a smokescreen for its advances. The hero in Mrs. E.D.E.N. Southworth's *India: The Pearl of Pearl River* goes West to renounce slavery, yet, as she herself knew, slavery was moving West. Southworth's nostalgia, Kolodny suggests, is misplaced. Southworth had cause to know that, in the very years *India* was serialized and published (1853-54), the Western territories offered a fresh and yet deeply mined arena for slavery and the controversy attending it. And, Kirkland and Fuller testified, Western frontier women were as much prisoners as Mary Rowlandson had been. While their husbands were out at work in the open air, they were confined by harsh domestic chores to semi-windowless abodes and equally confined cultural prospects.

The roughly 25 women Kolodny discusses were middle class and educated. They shared class values—ways of thinking about society and sexuality current in their day. They wished to ameliorate, not radically change the situation they faced. Kolodny argues that the Civil War cut off or altered the feminine dream of the West. Despite their lack of success, she respects the fantasies of her subjects.

Defining fantasy.

Yet "fantasy," the term Kolodny carefully selects to describe her protagonists' dreams and ideals, as conventionally understood neither has the authority of myth nor adheres to facts. The term suggests a collective experience. These fantasies had no effect on political or economic reality nor did they ever achieve the influential status of a popular literary form. The patterns of feminine hopes and fears Kolodny documents never constitute the kind of coherent protest she wishes to see.

Kolodny speculates inevitably on the different course American expansion might have taken had women's unfulfilled needs played a stronger part in its course: more intelligent and sustained patterns of settlement, a higher degree of ecological and ethnic responsibility. Such an agrarian utopia was the dream, Kolodny notes, of Crèvecoeur and Jefferson, and even Lincoln, a "union," a blending of disparate elements in a reinvigorated domestic ideal.

The West, that vast backyard and outpost for the chaos and compromises of the American experiment, offers its settlers and propagandists of both sexes the opportunity and the obligation of full practical and imaginative response. For different reasons, neither sex was able to accept this responsibility. Writing with the political concern that always characterizes her work, Kolodny stresses rightly that this failure both exposed and entailed the weakening of the stable, modest and creative components of the American dream.

Ann Douglas is affiliated with the Center for American Cultural Studies at Columbia University and her forthcoming book is *The Dream of the Wise Child*.

For the Ancestors: Autobiographical Memories

By Bessie Jones, Edited by John Stewart
University of Illinois Press, 203 pp., \$14.95

Hope and Dignity: Older Black Women of the South

By Emily Herring Wilson and Susan Mullally, Preface by Maya Angelou
Temple University Press, 200 pp., \$19.95

By Nell Irvin Painter

For the Ancestors is the "autobiographical memories" of a black spiritual singer, Bessie Jones, who died Sept. 6 of this year. She was the leading spirit of the Georgia Sea Island singers, whom the National Endowment for the Humanities awarded a National Heritage Fellowship in 1982. Born into a poor extended family in south Georgia in 1902, Bessie Jones began working for wages at the age of nine and had her first child at 12. As a young woman she married twice—both husbands died—and worked as an agricultural laborer in eastern Georgia and Florida. She settled in St. Simons Island in the Georgia Sea Islands in 1933. She called St. Simons home, although she realized that not having been born there, she would always remain something of a stranger.

Shortly after moving to St. Simons permanently, she began singing with the Coastal Georgia Spiritual Singers Society. Alan Lomax recorded her singing and featured her in a film in the mid-'50s. Since that time she had appeared often at colleges and folk festivals around the country. In 1976 she sang at President Jimmy Carter's inaugural and, in 1982, at the annual Folklife Festival in Washington, D.C. Although Bessie Jones' fame may draw readers to her initially, it is her importance as what her collaborator John Stewart calls a "core carrier" of the black spiritual tradition rooted in plantation life that makes this book fascinating.

The rural communities in which Bessie Jones grew up were full of her relatives, who people the book abundantly. An only child, she was raised by her mother and grandparents, and aunts and uncles were always near. Uncle Gene and his seventh wife Aunt Chery had two children, one named Lula who was Bessie's age. Bessie and Lula called Aunt Chery's mother "Aunt Margaret," and Aunt Margaret was a witch. Bessie's grandfather was an African, and although he passed on nothing to her about Africa he taught her a great deal about slavery days in Virginia: games, songs and family history. Bessie Jones grew up surrounded not only by kin, but also with a vivid sense of her family's past.

While readers interested in anthropology will relish Jones' descriptions of family, work, amusements, crafts and folk beliefs (some of which she accepts, others she rejects scornfully), for historians, her picture of race relations in the South is more interesting. She assumes, almost without mention, that the society in which she grew up was built around white supremacy. But that fact emerges anecdotally, as a series of uncomplicated realizations: blacks could not count on getting paid for their work; pretty black girls were subject to intolerable sexual harassment from white men; blacks should not appear to grow too prosperous.

Jones tells of her Uncle Son in

Dawson, Ga., who "had his own mules and everything; and in those days the crackers didn't want to see the Negro have nothing." Local whites framed Uncle Son, accusing him of flirting with a white woman. Even though the woman denied the charge, Uncle Son was lynched. In this instance, white power is prominent in the book, but Jones' stress, more importantly, is on blacks as they overcame racism and outwitted whites.

In this narrative, as in much of black oral tradition, blacks are naturally superior, at least the best blacks are better than whites and, more to the point, smarter than whites. When Bessie's grandfather teaches her songs that ridicule whites and that were sung in their presence, she asks whether whites realized that the songs made fun of them. Her grandfather says they didn't, because "they ain't got sense enough." Not smart enough to create their own inventions, whites steal what blacks invent. Throughout life, Bessie Jones says, "they're gonna cheat and steal from us some way." This version of race relations, which holds whites as a group in profound contempt, will be familiar to those who know black tradition, in which whites are mostly sneaky, jealous cheats, and the system of white supremacy can only be perpetuated by outright fraud.

Bessie Jones emerges from these pages as far more than a carrier of rural Southern culture and oral tradition. She is a self-reliant, self-made woman who prefers always to have her own income and her own room, so as to preserve her freedom. She distrusts the institution of marriage and refused for nearly a year to marry her first child's father. She married a second time for the respectability demanded of a woman of the church in the public eye. She liked her second husband enough, but without her spiritual singing career she would have seen no reason to marry again.

Older Women.

Unlike the lengthy, informal, autobiographical narrative of Bessie Jones, *Hope and Dignity: Older Black Women of the South* presents black North Carolinians in a series of portraits and short essays combining biography and autobiography. The women represent several classes, and their experiences range from life abroad to life in one country, from graduate education to no education at all. Because the women are so different, the unifying themes of the collection are broad: age, race and the authors' vision—Emily Herring Wilson and the photographer, Susan Mullally—both of whom are white.

Wilson and Mullally approach their subjects with a reverential respect. Wilson's essays show each woman, whether refined or unsophisticated, as larger than life. And the photographs, works of art in their own right, also stress formality and distance. It is as though the photos of unguarded moments reinforce the unfortunate, white Southern stereotypes that Maya Angelou mentions in her preface. These short narratives are a broad introduction to a great variety of older black women in the South. They merely whet the appetite for more sustained acquaintance, like *For the Ancestors*.

No consensus on race relations emerges from *Hope and Dignity*, but the ambivalence or outright



Each woman in *HOPE AND DIGNITY* is full of pride, testifying to the impotence of white supremacy.

ORAL HISTORY

Southern black women remembering the past

opposition toward school desegregation, particularly by teachers, is intriguing. May Terry Eldridge says, "I think black children are hurt emotionally in an integrated school." And Eliza Miles Dudley adds, "I don't like [school] integration. Do you want to know the truth of it: I don't see any advantages for black children." Helen Edmonds, who taught history for years at predominantly black North Carolina Central University, supports black colleges and sees a continuing need for them. (But she vigorously criticizes black supremacists like Marcus Garvey and Stokely Carmichael.)

Many of these women's words paint a picture of black life before the mid-'60s that was not seriously inconvenienced by segregation. Alice Jones Nickens remembers white families in her hometown as "very kind, very lovely people." Helen Edmonds says that she "never had any problems with race." And Nelle Artis Coley (agreeing with Bessie Jones) has taught generations of blacks that "there are no limitations unless you put them on yourself." Each woman is full of pride, testifying to the impotence of the system of white supremacy. But how are their views reconcilable with the history of racism and the tradition of black protest?

Nearly all these women, including Bessie Jones, are practicing Christians. They say their faith in a just God is not what lets them transcend earthly trials. They insist that they believe in the efficacy of individual effort and education.

Another general explanation for the endurance of hope and dignity is that they are women—that black women do not suffer from racism as deeply as black men. Black women and men are subject to racist practices in different forms, not to a greater or lesser degree. Black men are more likely to face discrimination in wages (which working

black women, of course, are subject to on grounds of both sex and race). But black women are particularly vulnerable to sexual harassment from white men. Lynching and rape represent the extremes of these forms of oppression.

I believe neither religion nor gender are satisfactory explanations of why so many of these older women show such little anger toward segregation. Bessie Jones and the women in the

Wilson-Mullally collection are all over 65. As older women looking back to the good old days, they look back to the South of the '20s, '30s and '40s, a segregated South, just as the ex-slaves of the Works Progress Administration, interviewed in the '30s looked back to their youth with misty eyes, even though spent in slavery.

These women not only grew up in a segregated South, they survived and succeeded within it. For this reason they are the sub-

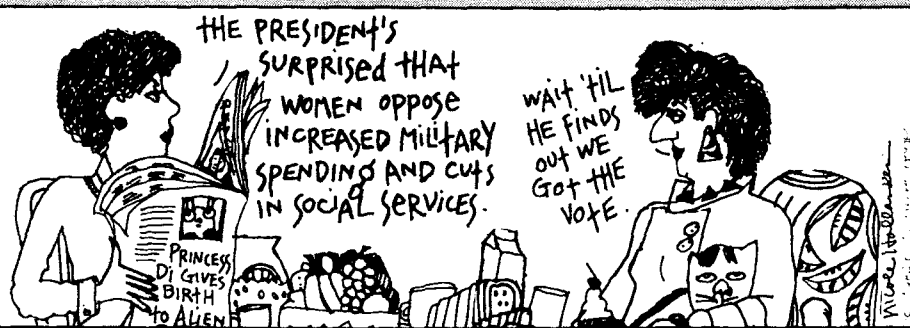
ject of a book about hope and dignity. In fact, even among North Carolina's black successes, Wilson mentions at least one woman who would not talk to them because of her deep distrust of whites. Bessie Jones spoke with a black interviewer, anthropologist John Stewart, and although she stresses individual initiative and lived a full life in a segregated world, her judgments about whites are far harsher than those collected by Wilson and Mullally.

But I think the crucial methodological difference is not the race of the interviewers, but the amount of time spent with the subject. Race and age separated Wilson and Mullally from their subjects, but class, nativity (he seems to be West Indian), sex and age separated Jones from Stewart. Stewart had to overcome the formality and distance of first meetings, but Wilson and Mullally sometimes saw their women only once, usually not more than two or three times. Stewart began to break down barriers by being introduced to Jones by members of her family. Then he interviewed her for two weeks in her home in May 1977, for several more weeks in July and August 1977, including a visit to her hometown, and, finally, Jones and Stewart worked together for three weeks in January 1978. All this contact provided a depth of contact that Wilson and Mullally could not and did not intend to reach.

The Jones-Stewart book is a valuable anthropological and historical source and the Wilson-Mullally collection is simply an introduction to the varied lives of Southern black women in the 20th century. The one will go on to note cards while the other remains on coffee tables. But each makes a contribution to black women's history.

Nell Irvin Painter teaches history at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She wrote the oral autobiography of a working-class black Communist, *Hosea Hudson*.

FILM CLIPS



Women's Voices: The Gender Gap Movie.

This 16-minute documentary answers the question "Sylvia" fans have been asking: what does Sylvia sound like? The cartoon character created by Nicole Hollander punctuates, with her acerbic brand of humor, this lively demonstration that the gender gap is real and anti-Reagan. Women who work selling Avon products and as teachers, homemakers, dairy farmers and students also bring alive the statistics proving that the economy, foreign policy and social programs are women's issues. Black, white and Hispanic women show that the gender gap crosses the spectrum of the rainbow, too. Each woman says she will vote this year and register others to vote. Produced by Kartemquin Films (*The Chicago Maternity Center Story*, *The Last Pullman Car*), the film is a powerful tool for the election season's organizing

work. Your only problem will be getting a copy in time for it to make a difference—so order it now. For information on film or video copies, contact Kartemquin, 1901 W. Wellington, Chicago, IL 60657. (312) 472-4366.

New Voices.

Public Interest Video Network (PIVN) is of the "don't mourn, organize" school of thought on mass media. Based in Washington, D.C., the national organization strives for diversity in public affairs TV programming through its teleconferences, productions, consulting and other projects. If you're fed up with not seeing your point of view on TV, then their most recent videotape, the 20-minute long "New Voices," is a quick way to consider your options. A witty montage sequence presents the reality that electronic media shape both what we know these days and how we know it. Then follows a

quick survey of ways to get your message on the air, with success stories from a variety of public interest groups. Public service announcements may be the most familiar, though perhaps the least accessible for many groups. Several people testify to the power of the Fairness Doctrine, which requires "fair" coverage of controversial issues on the air. Opinion polls, full length programs and even teleconferences are presented as options for groups that, PIVN finds, are typically shy to venture past traditional print methods of information-mongering. "New Voices" is intended to take the mystery out of do-it-yourself TV, and it's an excellent beginning. PIVN also, by the way, conducts "New Voices" seminars in Washington, D.C. For more information on or tape rental, contact PIVN, 1736 Columbia Road, NW, Washington, DC 20009. (202) 797-8997.

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Teachers

Continued from page 11

ped coming and she never saw him again. Years later she learned he came home in a body bag from Vietnam.

"Rafael's father remarried while he was in my class," she said, "and I still have the invitation to the wedding in my scrapbook. I was a young teacher and I didn't have the guts to go." She feels guilty now, she said, because he must have thought she knew he had run away and assumed she didn't care enough to talk to him about it.

The story of Jesus, Marcus' other student, has a happier ending. He was not

coming to school because he took care of pigeons and the teacher he had before wouldn't let him into class smelling like a pigeon coop. Marcus told him he was welcome in her class, as long as he washed his hands first. A few years ago she saw him mentioned in a story on page one of the *New York Times*. He is now a doctor in Texas serving low-income Americans and Mexicans and trying to create a hospital for the poor.

How different life might have been for both these boys, Marcus mused, if Rafael had stayed in school and Jesus had not. "I've been accused of romanticizing poverty," Marcus said, "but I like teaching inner-city schools. The children are not as reserved. There's a lot more physical expression of anything—anger or happiness."

Adrienne Lofton, another 1979 graduate of the program, teaches at School 40 in Jersey City, a couple of blocks from a huge housing project, a haven for junkies called Curry's Woods. Lofton has been teaching basic skills, or remedial courses, for several years and did not have a class of her own until a few weeks before school ended last June when she took over a third grade class that has had four teachers, including three substitutes, in one year. When I asked her why no one has lasted long with that class, she answered, "People give up very easily."

Lofton said the college program had given her something of an edge—"the stamina to stick things out." But she sounded tired and spoke slowly. "It's hard trying to just pass the day," she said. With only a few weeks left in the school year, there wasn't much she could do for the children, and after so many different teachers, they were "really wild."

"I don't smile," she said. "I haven't been able to smile with any of these kids. You have to keep a tough profile." She said some of the eight and nine year olds were already stealing. "They take a scissors and stick it in their socks."

One small desk was pushed away from the others in her room last spring, and Lofton explained it belonged to a boy

with some behavioral problems. She said he made noises and wouldn't do any work, and she was told by school officials not to worry about him, that this fall he would be placed in a special class. She didn't know if he could read.

Public schools get short shrift.

Across town from School 40 on Jersey City's run-down waterfront, a string of decaying piers is being transformed into Newport City, an office and apartment complex certain to cash in on Manhattan's current real estate boom and lure middle-income New Yorkers across the Hudson River. It will have one million square feet of office space, 1,400 apartments and a shopping mall.

Good schools will be a high priority for newcomers with children, but if history is any indication, the public schools will continue to get short shrift. Almost every Jersey City mayor since 1900 has been a Roman Catholic who has either attended or sent his children to parochial schools. According to an article in the *Jersey Journal*, parochial schools have been the schools of choice for Jersey City residents, and the public schools have traditionally been used for political patronage. More than 50 percent of Jersey City's population is white, while more than 80 percent of the city's 31,000 public school students are black or Hispanic.

Mayor McCann, who spends most of his time trying to attract new business and development, has said politics should stay out of education. But the former superintendent of schools has criticized the practice of selling teachers tickets to dinners and other political functions during school time as one example of political interference. Teachers might think they were being evaluated on the number of tickets they bought, he said.

There has been no lack of political feuding and infighting on school board matters since the mayor took office. Meanwhile, although scores on state tests in reading and mathematics have improved in the last few years, in 1983 the Jersey City school district still ranked in the bottom fifth of all public schools in the state,

and many of its students are still functionally illiterate.

Deborah Lee, another graduate of the Alternative Teacher Training Program, said she got her first inkling of how the school system was run the day she applied for a job there. She told the interviewer about her unique experience in college, how she had worked with teachers at School 15 for two and a half years, doing everything: giving out report cards, discussing problem children with parents, taking over a class. "I just went on and on," she said, "but all he wanted to know about was experience where I had worked for money."

Lee was hired to teach students learning to speak English. She was on maternity leave last year, but said she couldn't wait to go back to work this month. She said the college program had helped her understand children better, to see that their problems are often "a cry for help. There are so many things you can do in different circumstances to help or hurt them."

When she was still a student teacher, a boy who had been released from a juvenile home threatened someone in the class with a can opener. Lee said she called him to the front of the room and asked him to help her monitor the class by writing down the names of anyone who talked. That calmed him down and made him feel useful. She said confronting him in front of the other children would only force him to defy her to save face. Out in the hall, he handed her the can opener. "He laughed," she said, "and told me he wasn't really going to use it anyway."

Lee would like a class of her own someday, and a chance to see what she could do with children if she had them for a whole year instead of an hour a day. But she said that doesn't seem likely. About the only thing she can pin her hopes on is a political connection: a principal she once worked for was named head of the school system. He always liked her work, she said. Maybe he will remember her now.

Mary Ellen Schoonmaker is a New York-based freelance journalist.

CALENDAR

Use the calendar to announce conferences, lectures, films, events, etc. The cost is **\$20.00 for one insertion, \$30.00 for two insertions** and **\$15.00 for each additional insert**, for copy of 50 words or less (additional words are 50¢ each). Payment must accompany your announcement, and should be sent to the attention of Kirby Mittelmeyer.

WASHINGTON, D C

September 24

Washington premiere of *Seeing Red*, stories of American Communists. Film showing followed by discussion and reception with Julia Reichert, Dorothy Healey and Stretch Johnson. Takoma Theatre, 4th and Butternut NW, Washington, DC. 7:15 p.m. Tickets \$10, DC/Md DSA; 1346 Connecticut Ave., NW, Washington, DC 20036, or at the door.

NEW YORK, N Y

September 29

Solidarity benefit for Phelps-Dodge copper miners at District 65/UAW, 13 Astor Place, 8:00 p.m. Video: *High Stakes in Murenci*; Labor Songs: *Serious Bizness*; followed by dance. Strike leader Angel Rodriguez will speak. Tickets: \$10. Sponsored by New York City Film Club, (212) 266-1905.

TEACHING MARXISM

Works by Bertell Ollman, Prof. of Politics, NYU

NEW!

- Left Academy: Marxist Scholarship on American Campuses**, vol. II, co-ed with Edward Vernoff (Praeger, 1984). Disciplines covered: Literature, Education, Law, Geography, Classics, Art History, and Biology.
- Left Academy: Marxist Scholarship on American Campuses**, vol. I, co-ed with Edward Vernoff (McGraw Hill, 1982). Disciplines covered: Political Science, Sociology, Economics, Philosophy, History, Psychology, and Anthropology.
- Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society** (Cambridge U.P., 1971 and 1976, 7th printing). Adopted in classes at over 300 universities. "A remarkable book . . . Ollman has discovered a kind of Ariadne's thread through the maze of Marxian linguistic problems . . . brilliant and illuminating." *New York Review of Books*.
- Social and Sexual Revolution: Essays on Marx and Reich** (South End Press, 1979). Emphasis is on class consciousness, dialectical method, and Marx's vision of communism.
- Studies in Socialist Pedagogy**, co-ed with Ted Norton (Monthly Review Press, 1978). How-to-do-it book for (and by) socialist teachers.
- "What is Marxism? A Bird's-Eye View"**, (Red Hot Publications, 1982). A brief (10pp.), clear, humorous overview that touches all the main bases. For introductory classes or study groups.

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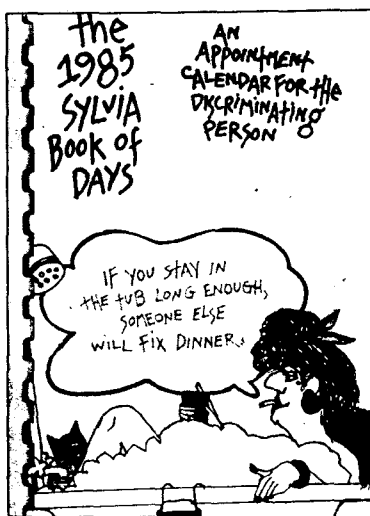
- Class Struggle board game**, (Avalon Hill Game Co., 4517 Harford Rd., Baltimore, Md., 1983). New book case edition of first Marxist board game. Has been used in over 100 college and high school class rooms to simulate the real thing. "More fun than *Das Kapital*." Paul Sweezy and Harry Magdoff.
- Class Struggle computer game** (for Apple II computer only at this time), (Avalon Hill Game Co., 1984). First Marxist computer game. Now you can also assign it for home playing/reading.
- Class Struggle Is the Name of the Game: True Confessions of a Marxist Businessman** (Wm. Morrow Pub., 1983). Like it says. Also contains an account of the author's academic freedom controversy with the Univ. of Maryland. "In these pages, Karl and Groucho Marx finally meet and share their respective talents for critical economic theory and madcap humor. A must text for micro-economic courses." James O'Connor.

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Schools

Continued from page 13

providing any more coaching? "Excellence" has to be for everybody, unless the crusade against "mediocrity" is a covert war on equality.

Second, although important system-wide reforms are needed, the individual school has to be the locus of reform. Increasingly centralized school systems should reverse trends and start giving more power and discretion to individual schools. A school's program should reflect a distinct set of needs, with a vision and tradition of its own.

Third, the school reform movement will be defined by its allies. If reformers ally with (and not merely sympathize with) principals and teachers, the movement may take advantage of this rare historical moment. Like everything else in American life, success will involve forging coalitions.

Finally, in seizing this reform moment, Gradgrind's basic assumptions about education must be confronted. His hand-to-mouth utilitarianism has not served either schools or politics well. It's time to

insist on the intrinsic and political reasons for creating and preserving and reforming—public education. Jobs and national prosperity matter enormously, but there are reasons for public education that transcend the political economy of Gradgrind.

We educate students to be citizens because we want the future republic to be in their good hands. And we maintain high schools because learning is good in and of itself, the lifelong expression of our sense of wonder. To the extent that we abandon these lifelong goals for the shortsightedness of Gradgrind, we insult the experiment called democracy. ■

Joseph Featherstone, former headmaster of the Commonwealth Schools, is a contributing editor of the New Republic.

Chess

Continued from page 24

From the beginning the team was pitted against older and more experienced players to sharpen their skills. It wasn't until September 1981 at an Indiana regional chess tournament that the Masters of Disaster actually played players their

own age. The team came in a respectable 13th and made as its collective goal the winning of the national championship in 1983.

From them on it was a steady round of tournaments and a steady honing of skills. The watershed came in a prelude to the 1983 Nationals in a tournament in Pulaski, Va.

"This was strong chess country," says Cotter, "and I don't think they expected us."

Indeed, it's highly unlikely that the denizens of Pulaski, part of Southern white culture, expected much competition from an all-black chess team from Indianapolis. But it was at Pulaski that the Masters of Disaster made an outstanding showing. Says Len Wallace, "When we won that I knew we were going to win the Nationals."

They were held in Memphis, Tenn., April 30-May 1. The final round pitted the Masters against the team from Hunter College Elementary School, which is attended by children of New York's intelligentsia. The kids from Indianapolis came out on top.

Although this past school year several student Masters transferred out of School #27 to attend junior high at School #47, the team practiced two-and-a-half hours

IN THESE TIMES SEPT. 19-25, 1984 23 after class each school day. Weekends were spent in tournament play.

Walter Thompson, a 35-year-old black self-employed engineer, was on the coaching staff from January to March this year, teaching advanced play. He strongly believes that at least one of the team will achieve Master's status by his 16th birthday, thus making him the youngest black Master in chess history. "It just a toss-up as to which one," he says.

A ghetto product himself, Thompson didn't start playing chess until he was in his 20s. "These kids have a tremendous advantage because they started so young," he adds.

In 1983, School #27's team finished a respectable third at the Elementary Nationals in Syracuse, N.Y., while School #47's team also finished third at the Junior High Nationals in Tucson, Ariz. But Derrick Brownie, a member of the team from School #47, finished second in the nation as an individual.

The future? Starting this school year both teams will combine at School #47 to become, in Cotter's words, "the strongest junior high team in the history of U.S. chess"—definitely a prime contender for first place in 1985.

George Fish is an Indianapolis-based freelance journalist.

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BIBLICAL ERRANCY. Free copy: 23 Fay Drive, Enon, OH 45323.

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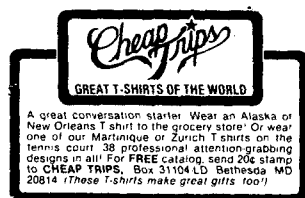
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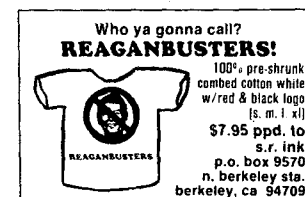
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INDIANAPOLIS PUBLIC SCHOOL #27 CHESS TEAM
1983 INDIANA STATE CHAMPIONS
1983 NATIONAL ELEMENTARY CHAMPIONS

BY GEORGE FISH

IN MANY WAYS THE 1983 National Elementary Championship Chess Team is like any other championship chess team. All members of the "Masters of Disaster," as they call themselves, from Indianapolis, Ind., Public School #27 are bright, dedicated, disciplined and motivated. But two things distinguish this team from the rest: it is all black and its members come from one of the worst sections of the city's sprawling northside ghetto.

"Most chess champions come from families who live in \$50,000-\$75,000 homes," says Len Wallace, one of three team coaches. "Give me an environment like that and I'll show you national champion after national champion." But Wallace says this team is special because "as a result of chess

they've experienced a world they probably wouldn't have seen otherwise."

And seen a world the Masters of Disaster have. Since winning the championship, the team appeared on national TV, had a private audience with President Reagan and toured Japan. Of the 11 male team members, seven are ranked among the best 50 players under 13 years old in the U.S.

The motivating spirit behind the team is Bob Cotter, an intense 35-year-old white science teacher, who overcame racial and cultural barriers to put the team together. In September 1980 he began recruiting the team while many of its future members were still in fourth grade. His original motivation, something heretofore unheard of at the school, was to use the team as a teaching aid to help members develop mathematical, logical and analytical skills. He recruited team members out of his science classes and, to overcome their reluctance to join, promised each one extra use of the gym if he joined. Due to their strong athletic orienta-

tion, the boys he asked consented. And Cotter delivered.

At first the young students were wary and somewhat uncomprehending about chess. And the boys encountered some peer pressure against their interest in chess. A few of the team's classmates regarded chess as "sissy" and there was also the generalized cultural antipathy of the black ghetto toward what was regarded as a white man's pastime.

Says 11-year-old Anthony Elliott, "First I thought it was something like checkers." Adds 12-year-old Anthony Allen, "First, we didn't like the game. We thought it was too hard and it was boring. But then we got to travel every Saturday and it was fun."

Steve Garrett, now 13, joined

the team because "there wasn't any other sport at the school."

Thirteen-year-old Derrick "Rabbit" Thomas started playing chess at age nine. "Rabbit" (he got the nickname because of his speed as a runner) joined the team because "I saw all the other people playing, and I asked them what they were playing, and they said, 'chess.' I thought it was interesting, so I started playing."

In tournament chess points are awarded according to a mathematical formula based on the strength of one's opponent and the outcome of the game. A player accumulates points by beating an opponent of equal or better skill. It takes 2,300 points to achieve Master's status. Anthony Elliott had, as of this past January, a total of 1,492 points, an exceptional total for his age. "Rabbit" Thomas had 1,581 points, while Anthony Allen had 1,550.

Continued on page 23

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